IN THE HILLS OF GALILEE

LOUIS TUCKER

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IN THE HILLS OF GALILEE

In the Hills of Galilee

Stories of the Time of Christ

By
Louis Tucker

With Illustrations by
Edna E. Potter

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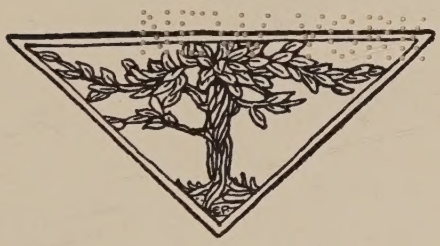

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IN THE HILLS OF GALILEE

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Joseph in Alexandria

WHILE not so large as Rome, Alexandria was large enough to hide in. When Joseph Bar David, fleeing from Herod, hid the Lord Christ in Egypt, he could not live in a

native village without being as conspicuous as an Englishman who lives like a native in India. He could not work at his trade, either, for Egyptians would not employ a foreigner; but he could plunge into the Jewish quarter of Alexandria and be lost among its hundred thousand Hebrew artizans, like a raindrop in the ocean. This, therefore, he must have done; for there was no other way, and Herod did not find him.

Therefore the Lord Christ lived in the slums of Alexandria, a little Jewish boy called Jesus Bar David, known as the son of a Jewish ship-carpenter. He saw the great lighthouse at the harbor mouth, that showed ships the way home. He knew the narrow streets and crowded tenements of the Jewish quarter. Now and then, for a great treat, his mother took him to the gardens of the great library, or of the museum, where he had room to run and good green grass to play on. But, for the most part, he lived in the packed, crowded and congested streets of the ship-building quarter, and learned to speak Greek there.

Joseph could not attract attention by do-

ing anything greatly different from others, so in a tenement they lived. Because of the gold and spices of the Magi, they lived in modest ease, obscure but comfortable. Probably a little over a year would cover their stay. Herod did not live long after the death of the babes of Bethlehem.

Cruel as he was, Herod was a famous and magnificent old ruffian. Every synagogue in the Empire had news of him, for, by his death, the scepter departed out of Israel—a thing which, it was promised, should not happen until Shiloh came. The Romans took the kingdom, putting in first a weak prince and then a procurator. Nothing kept Joseph from going home; nothing, that is, except that he had been ordered into Egypt and should have felt it a duty to stay until further orders.

Mary pined for Judea. Alexandria is flat land, river-mouth plains, a weariness to the soul of any hillwoman. The boy Jesus, too, needed room. A great city is no place to bring up children. Judea and Galilee averaged a thousand persons to the square mile, or so the figures given by the rabbis

work out in modern measure. Even that is small compared with the teeming ant-hill on the little semi-island of Alexandria. So, longing for the gray-green vine and olive covered hills grew and grew, and the tension heightened in the hearts of Mary and Joseph.

Then, one night, Mary woke—or, perhaps, slept more deeply. At least, she saw. There was a brightness in the room. The Little Master, wide awake, sat up on his pallet in the corner and saw too. Joseph stayed fast asleep, much faster asleep than usual. The brightness grew and grew. There came snatches of far-off song, heard faintly, almost inaudible. Then little whiffs and currents of fresh air, keen, cool and pure. The brightness gathered, grew denser, then flashed into a figure. It towered, made of light. A rainbow played around it. There was no sound, and yet it seemed as if the whole sky thundered. There was no noise, and yet it seemed as if the birds of all the woods of all the world were singing.

The Presence humbled Itself a moment

before the Little Master in the corner, then turned to Joseph. He lay asleep, yet strove so strongly to awaken that it was strange to see him. His muscles knotted and then relaxed, tensed and then slacked again. His breathing quickened. Beads of moisture stood on his forehead, but still Joseph slept.

"Arise," he said, repeating a lesson. "Arise and go for they are dead which sought the young child's life."

Joseph was carpenter, not soldier, but he was by right a king and came of soldier stock. Slowly, and still asleep, he struggled and sat up, and his hand came to his forehead in salute. Slowly the great Messenger drew his sword of clear cold flame and brought hilt to forehead in answering salute.

The brightness faded. The little whiffs of cool air came and went again. Everything grew indistinct. There was no more than just a little light in the room and the faintest dying hint of far-off singing, when Joseph dropped his hand, relaxed and awoke.

"Mary," he said, "I had a dream; a vivid dream."

"I know," said Mary. "You spoke in your sleep. We go back to Palestine again, to the hills, to the long hills, to the high and purple glory of the hills; and God goes with us. I am glad, glad."

Return from Egypt

NONE understands the Bible who forgets the desert, or does not know that Palestine is practically an oasis, a watered spot dominated by drought, an island surrounded by sand. Writers in the Bible are always conscious of the desert, as sailors afloat are conscious of the sea.

The desert charms like a snake. When once it sets its fang on man or woman, they show it. It is like the sea in this for the same reasons—great space and utter distance, vast horizons, few people, and the feel of the presence of the One God.

Joseph showed it least, for he was oldest when it gripped him. Mary showed it most,

for she was a young mother with a baby when it put into her eyes something that never left them. Little Jesus took it in as a dry sponge takes water. The desert enveloped him, soaked into him. It became a part of him. It set into his soul something pure, austere and vast, that stayed there. It lifted his thoughts beyond earth and into the clear heavens.

The Conquerors' Road is over shifting sand. Since history began, the great empire-builders, whether the empire be worldly or religious, have mostly seen the pyramids and drunk Nile water. They have toiled across the isthmus between desert hills and strode on sand. Therefore it is the Conquerors' Road. The greatest conqueror of all, upon unsteady, almost baby feet, traveled it now.

"See, mother, I can take big steps."

"Does the sand burn your feet, son?"

"Not much, not through the sandals; but it is warm."

"Then ride. Mother likes to walk."

"Oh, no, mother; I am a man, now."

"Four years old is not a man's age yet,

little son. Tell him again the story of the angel, Joseph, and let him ride. The little feet are tired, though so sturdy."

"Come, Jesus, up you go in front of mother. The last time we came this way you rode in mother's arms, you were so small. Look at the dance of the hot air over the sand. See how it shimmers into rainbow colors. Is it not beautiful? So the great colors shimmered around Gabriel, when in a dream, three nights ago, he came to me and sent us home."

"Where is home?"

"For us, home is Bethlehem, that nestles in the kindly hills. You have not seen the hills, the old, old, purple-shadowed hills, nor breathed the wind from the hills, clean as the will of God."

"Is home where God is?"

"Yes, dear; but God is everywhere. So home, for us, is where God holds the little town of Bethlehem in the hollow of His hand. He sent us there four years ago."

"He holds this desert, too?"

"Of course He does. He holds the whole wide world."

"Then we are in His hand, and sheltered close, as I have sheltered a little tiny bird in my hands?"

"We are."

"And safe?"

"Yes, safe—except, perhaps, from wicked men who defy God."

"Are any men so wicked?"

"Yes, dear."

"But would not God save us from even them?"

"Why, so He would."

"Are there more dangers?"

"For us, dear, none. We are well guarded. And almost we have passed the desert. Africa is behind us and the next sand-hill, or the next but one, shows the first trees of Asia. There comes a little party now, over the crest of the sand-dune, who may, perhaps, tell us how far. Hail, friends!"

"Hail, Hebrew!"

"How far to water?"

"An hour. What news in Goshen?"

"All quiet there. Who rules in Judea?"

"The Roman Senate has set up Archelaus

in room of his father, Herod. What was the weather in the desert?"

"Clear and still."

"Thanks, and farewell."

"What think you, Joseph?"

"There might be risk in Bethlehem."

"Why do you yawn and rub your eyes, little son?"

"I'm sleepy, mother."

"Joseph, the caravansaries are none too pleasant. Could we not camp here in the clean desert and let him rest?"

"No reason why we should not. Turn aside, though, behind a sand-hill. When

we are safe from sight of the road I will stretch the tent, and we shall all have a drink of water and a nap."

Joseph stretched the low Bedouin tent. It sheltered Mary and Jesus, and enabled Joseph himself to get head and shoulders into the shade. They all slept, and the short shadows grew longer.

Then an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. To Mary and little Jesus he appeared plainly. Mary sat up, finger on her lip as Jesus roused. The angel knelt before little Jesus and signed both Mary and Jesus to silence, then spoke:

"Joseph."

"Aye."

"Nay, go on sleeping. Were you to wake you could not see nor hear me. It is Word of the Lord that you are to turn aside from Jerusalem and Bethlehem and go into the parts of Galilee about Nazareth and there abide with the child. So shall you dwell in safety. It is commanded."

"I hear. It is commanded."

The angel smiled and was gone. Joseph

turned uneasily and muttered, then awoke and spoke.

"I dreamed I saw an angel, Mary."

"I know. You spoke in your sleep."

"That was Oriel," said Jesus. "He is very bright."

"He said we are to live in Nazareth."

"Oh, Joseph, do you think we can get the dear house, the old house, the house where I was born?"

"There is still some gold, Mary. Perhaps we may."

"How good God is."

Joseph struck tent and started. Little Jesus walked before them on the Conquerors' Road.

The Patched Cloak

We, who live in an age of cotton, can not realize how all the world used to be troubled for clothes. From the time skins of wild beasts grew scarce to the invention of the cotton-gin, the whole wide world was never far from nakedness. There was never enough wool and flax, so that men eked out clothes with hemp and jute and other stranger fabrics, and even our great grandfathers wore leather coats and breeches.

Especially was there scarcity in the Oasis. Palestine is a desert now, not greatly different from other deserts, but before God cursed it, and rains and the Moslems destroyed the irrigation channels, Palestine

was the most fertile, crowded, prosperous little country on the globe. It could not raise enough sheep nor flax to clothe itself. Garments were hard to get; they were prized and patched; and a good woolen cloak was worth its weight in coined copper.

Yet Palestine was not a naked country. Costly as clothes were, it could buy them. Irrigated to the last square inch, covered with orchards, receiving for the festivals tourists by the million who always brought money in and never took it out, Palestine was able to import clothing.

Little boys with torn clothes run to their mothers—or away from them—according to the temper of those mothers. Therefore, when little Jared Bar Jochabad fell off the wall on the far side of the well-curb and tore the right elbow out of his coat, he ran to his mother. It was an old coat but sound until this misfortune. She patched it. Being a young mother and not knowing as much as she would later, she patched it with new cloth. Also, she scolded.

Now a patch of new cloth will not stay on an old place that has worn thin. Try it

and see. The threads pull out. So when little Jared fell again—this time it was in playing pop-the-whip in the lane behind the schoolhouse and his elbow barely brushed along the stones—the threads pulled and the patch came off. It was a grave disaster. He dared not take it to his mother again. She scolded.

He and his friend Jesus gravely talked it over. They were very little boys, about six or seven years old, and, therefore, in times of consultation, very dignified. And Jesus, since his mother Mary did not scold, finally suggested that they go to her with the torn coat. So, avoiding the coppersmith's shop, they trotted by back ways to Joseph the carpenter's, and there consulted Mary.

Mary laughed, which the boys could not understand at all. And then her eyes filled with tears, which they understood even less. The matter seemed pure business, with nothing funny or pathetic about it. Then she kissed them both, at which they squirmed, and then did the first common-sense thing. She sat down and gravely and painstakingly explained that you must not use new cloth

EDNA E. POTTER

to patch old garments and showed them why. You must use old cloth in larger patches and then it holds. She took an old piece of cloth from a little worn-out coat of Jesus' and patched Jared Bar Jochabad's coat. And both boys kissed her of their own accord and ran away to play.

Years later, when little Jesus had become a leader of His nation, He used this story to show certain eminent men why He was starting a movement of His own instead of reforming the good, old, established customs of the country.

The Lost Coin

MIRIAM BATHJOHN lived in Branchtown. For four thousand years Branchtown has nestled near the ridge where the road from the oldest city in the world sprawls over the divide between the Lake of Galilee and the middle sea; Miriam lived about the middle of that time, as well as the middle of the village. She had a house of her own, left by her parents; but they left nothing else, so she had to work very hard for a living. She was a cheerful body and well liked. The other women, her neighbors, made much of her, for she sometimes sewed a longer seam than that agreed on for a price, or helped more about a house than the time bargained

for; and when there was sickness or sorrow, she often came and helped for no price at all.

It was the custom of that country, nearly as old as its hills and quite as settled, that no girl could marry without a dowry. She saved it, coin by coin. Each coin was pierced with a small hole and strung on a copper wire; and she wore the wire, with the jingling coins hanging from it, in her hair, like a crown. Miriam Bathjohn had ten coins.

The silver of which each was made was mixed with base metal and would have been worth about twenty cents now. So great was the purchasing power of money then—about fifty times what it is to-day—that each bought as much as will a modern ten-dollar gold piece. She kept them very carefully, for it had taken a long time to earn them. There would have been more, but there was a very old, old, grandaunt, bedridden, who lived with her and could not work. There would have been less, for all would have gone to take care of the aunt, but there was a young man who looked with

interest at the face under the crown of coins when Miriam passed to her place behind the women's screen in the synagogue on Sabbath day.

One of the women who sent for Miriam Bathjohn when she needed help was named Mary—Mary Bar David. She was the wife of the village carpenter, and had one child —a little boy. Miriam Bathjohn sometimes helped nurse him, and the two women had grown to love each other.

Miriam's house was adobe—a one-room mud hut with a clay floor. We would have called it a poor stable for a decent pony. Its only furniture, except a charcoal furnace, a table and some stools, was a raised bank of beaten clay across one end, about eighteen inches high, and one cot bedstead for the old aunt. Stools, cot and furnace were inherited. The table was Joseph's work, made in odd times out of odd scraps of wood, and given to Miriam by Mary Bar David, in grateful acknowledgment of kindly help. Miriam's own pallet was on the divan of baked clay near the table on which stood the lamp.

One night, as she lay down upon the pallet, having blown out the light, she caught the copper wire in her hair upon the corner of the table, and broke it. The coins had worn it thin. Of course, the coins slid off. Nine of them were found easily, but no amount of hunting, even on hands and knees, could find the tenth.

Now this was a disaster so great that it was hard to tell of. So she got out flint steel and tinder and lighted the lamp. It took ten minutes and woke the old aunt. Then she swept the house carefully, raising a dust from the clay floor, while the spiders, ants and roaches that lived in the cracks grew hostile. At last, after she had searched the whole house over a dozen times, she found the coin on edge against the wall behind the water-jar. She then slipped it into place, twisted the two ends of the wire together and went to sleep.

There you or I, in her place, would have ended the matter, for we would have thought ourselves too poor to do anything more about it. But Miriam Bathjohn did not think herself poor at all. She had

enough to eat, drink and wear, and lived as well as did her neighbors. What more need a sensible person want? As she went to the spring next morning for water, she told her particular friends about it and brought them home with her, for in the long, leisurely life of the East there was plenty of time.

So Miriam Bathjohn called her female friends and neighbors to rejoice with her. Refreshments would be implied in the Western World and are implied with double strength in the East, where hospitality is very great. She gave a tea-party. Of course, there was no tea—it had not been brought from China then—and no cake because honey was too expensive and sugar not yet discovered. But there were bread and wine and dried figs.

They all talked at once. Miriam told exactly how she had felt when the coin was lost and found. At the same time her friends kept up a running fire of comment and congratulation, and all told their similar experiences. No mere man could have caught a word of the babel, yet the women understood all that was said, though talking

themselves. The scene was inexpressibly familiar, inexpressibly comic, inexpressibly full of homely joy. Mary Bar David was there, and had brought little Jesus, her son.

Years afterward Jesus grew up and became the greatest preacher the world has ever seen. One day He told the story of the lost coin and Miriam Bathjohn's party, and used it to teach His listeners a great lesson.

The Knife

At Nazareth in Galilee two thousand years ago all children had to go to school just as they must to-day. Elsewhere the little heathen boys and girls played all the time and never learned to read and write, unless they were rich. But Galilee was different. There they worshiped the One True God, and God does not like ignorance. Even the poorest little boys and girls at Nazareth learned to read and write and cipher.

Nazareth was quite a town, so there was more than one school. The teachers were all men. Each teacher had his own school, so that no school was ever very large. There

were no desks and benches. Everybody sat cross-legged on the ground around the teacher. When they wanted to do sums or learn the shapes of letters they often wrote on the bare earth. It was a very good way to save paper and slates.

Nobody called the teacher by his name. They all said "Rabbi." Whenever anybody had memory-work to do he did it out loud, over and over, at the top of his voice. As you walked along any street you could hear one school until you came into hearing of another.

There was one school, down in the workman's quarter, which was more crowded than usual. Little Jesus Bar David went there. His people were peasants, but he really was descended from King David. He should have been King of Israel. His teacher knew it, and took pains not to treat him better than anybody else because of it. His relations knew it, too. So they sent their boys on visits to get acquainted with him. It was not certain that he would stay a peasant. He might become a king. If he did, it

would be a good thing for his cousins to know him well.

Four of these cousins, James and Joses and Simon and Jude, the sons of Alphæus Cleopas who lived in Capernaum, were at Nazareth on such a visit, and three of them were at school with Jesus for a week or two. James was too old and grand to go. He stayed at home and talked with Joseph instead, and helped in the carpenter-shop. The others went every day and learned to read the Bible at the tops of their voices. Joses had a voice like a gimlet and Simon like a saw, but Jude's voice was pleasing. So was Jude himself. He was the youngest, and his brothers called him "Jolly."

Quite a number of the people of Nazareth were really fond of Jesus. The Book says he grew in favor with God and man. He was such a friendly man that he must always have been a friendly boy. The thing a small boy wants most is a knife. So it is not imagination, it is practically a certainty, that the cutler, the man who made

knives, a kind of blacksmith more skilful than any blacksmith, made one and gave it to him. It was a little knife in a leather sheath, fit for a small boy's girdle.

The other boys were consumed with envy. None of them had a knife but James, and his was not so good. They all handled the new knife, and looked at it, and borrowed it, and passed it about from one to the other, and each wished he owned it.

The clothes in Galilee were different from ours. School-teachers wore something very like a dressing-gown, reaching to the ankles and belted in at the waist by a girdle creased into many folds. These folds in girdles were used as pockets. It was in a large fold in his little girdle that the boy Jesus kept the knife. Boys' robes reached only to their knees.

The schoolmaster who taught the school where Jesus went was about thirty, which was middle-aged for that time and country. He had a long black beard and a twinkle in his eye, and his voice had pleasant undertones. But when he grew angry he grew very angry, indeed, and all in a flash. His

name was Asa Bar Baruch, and he was very tall and thin. When he sat cross-legged on a cushion on the ground the ends of his robe did not always tuck under as they should.

These loose robe-ends fascinated Jolly Jude. He watched them as a kitten watches a mouse. The school-room was a one-story adobe building, covered with thatch. As adobe is only dried mud and thatch is straw, the room was cool in summer and warm in winter. What more do boys want? The floor was trampled earth. If you had to do a sum you did it on the floor with a stick and rubbed it out with your foot when the teacher had looked it over. A knife-point is better than even the sharpest stick to mark on the ground.

Rabbi Asa Bar Baruch was very patient and careful with children and a very good teacher, but he did not realize how fascinating the skirt of his robe looked when it lay on the ground behind him and wiggled when he moved. Jude pretended that it was a mouse and he a cat, and that he tried to catch it but it got away. Then he pretended that it was a snake and that he was

afraid of it. Roman or Greek children would have laughed. These, being Orientals, took it solemnly. Still, their eyes twinkled.

Then Jude reached over into Jesus' girdle and took his knife. It was done so quickly that it would have been hard to stop him. With the same motion he stabbed down at the loose end of the robe—and overbalanced. The knife went through the robe into the ground.

A really good teacher grows to know what the scholars are thinking almost before they do. So Rabbi Asa knew that something serious had happened without knowing how. He rose to his feet. As he did so the hem of his robe left the ground and plucked the knife up with it. Then the knife dangled against his ankles until he felt it and looked down. He drew it out and looked at the hole in the hem of his robe, and then he looked around at the boys. Clothes were so expensive that a hole in the hem of a robe was a very serious thing.

Nobody said anything. It was Jesus' knife. Rabbi Asa grew very angry indeed.

"Yeshua," he said ("Yeshua" is the way the Galileans pronounced "Jesus"), "it is your knife and you sat behind me. Did you do that?"

Jesus looked Rabbi Asa in the eye and answered him never a word.

"Yeshua," repeated Rabbi Asa, "did you do that?"

Jesus was silent.

"Yeshua," said the Rabbi again, "you have been a perfect scholar. In all these years I have never had cause to punish you. If you did pierce my robe there must have been cause for it. But you must answer. Did you do that?"

Probably Jesus would have stayed silent. Probably Rabbi Asa would have punished him. All sorts of disagreeable things might have happened if Jude had not been the right kind of boy. As it was, he looked at the Rabbi and then at Jesus and at everybody else and said:

"Excuse me, Rabbi. I did not mean to do it. I lost my balance and fell forward."

Then, suddenly Rabbi Asa understood it all. Quick as he was to anger he was also

quick to see things, and he saw them now. He bit his lips and controlled himself, but his eyes stopped blazing and began to twinkle.

"Young man," he said to Jude, "I ought to punish you—punish you sharply. But" —and here the twinkle in his eyes spilled out over his face—"but I can not, because you told the truth."

Homer at Nazareth

Because the hill road northward along the ridge crosses the caravan road from Damascus and the immemorial East, there is a caravansary at Nazareth and always has been. Whenever it falls down from sheer old age, somebody builds it up again. With stone, of course. Stone is cheap and can be had for picking up. The timber was cut off the Nazareth hills three thousand years ago, and wood is very costly.

Men are too dignified to climb to it, but the one-story flat roof of the caravansary makes a very good place for boys. From it they can view foreigners in the courtyard, as the gallery looks down on the stage in a

theater. And there has always been a ruined wall or two to get up by. Therefore the small boys of Nazareth, generation by generation, for three thousand years, have watched the whole wide world drift in slow current through the caravansary, and they know about more foreign lands than many travelers. One not too dignified to use it rightly finds Nazareth a university and travel and a liberal education.

This was particularly true in the year seven A.D., because Nazareth spoke two languages then. Among themselves the boys talked Aramaic, but Greek was the international language, which everybody knew. The boys spoke it to the travelers and the travelers to one another. Nearly every boy was schooled in Hebrew. Every boy had manual training and could earn his living at some handicraft or trade. In a slipshod, Oriental, but quite workable way, they were well educated.

All sorts and conditions of men, women and children, from every nation in the known world, drifted along the road between Damascus and the sea. If there were

a university founded for knowing people, the boys could have taken high degrees. Better opportunity and instruction would be hard to find. Boys could sit quietly on the flat roof of the caravansary, look over the parapet, and see more of human nature in the rough in one week than you and I see at home in years. To learn any man's character perfectly, take him out camping. In slow procession, the whole world comes and camps in any caravansary. Business went on in Greek, but the boys could discuss it in Aramaic. To see character undisguised and be able to talk it over freely is to learn the human soul.

The Greek cities of the Decapolis transacted much of their business with Cæsarea and the seaports by the Nazareth road. When a wandering Greek harper, seeking a little money and a meal on his way to the Greek cities, came to one of the camp-fires in the caravansaries and began that sonorous recital of the *Odyssey*, in which the music of the long hexameters mingles with the music of the harp, the small boys understood him.

Simon, son of Cleopas, was there, of course, with Levi and Jude and Joses, his brethren, and little Philip, who afterward moved to Bethsaida, and a dozen others. But the leader, both from innate force of character and because the others knew he might one day be king, was Jesus Bar David, from the carpenter's shop.

The boys were there on sufferance of the caretaker, with the understanding that they would not make themselves conspicuous. So they could do nothing but crane over the parapet and listen. They heard a Greek speak from the nearest fire.

"Come, grandfather, sit down and sing to us. Food you shall not lack."

"I am a poor old man, but tell of men, rich, young and heroes. Half-blind am I, a little of Heaven's light left to one eye, not fit to work, but seeing great works in the music of a dream. Make place at your fire for an old, old man and I shall sit me down. Where is the food?"

"Nay, sing first."

"So be it."

It was the *Odyssey*, and it was probably

the adventure with Polyphemus. No boy living can resist the story of the one-eyed giant and Captain Nobody. Catch one scrap of it and you must hear the rest. Whatever it was, it told about Ulysses talking to his long-suffering soul. Surely nothing is more truly Greek or more un-Jewish than this.

The boys went home that night a-tingle with the thrilling of the lyre and a-dream of ships and shipwrecked men and caves and giants. They had a glimpse into the great world of European thought, as strange to the Asiatic mind as the Orient is to us. Such glimpses are not forgotten.

Years later little Jesus Bar David grew up to be the most famous orator of the world, though in His other claims to greatness His genius as orator is often overlooked and forgotten. In one of His great orations, He spoke of a man about to die and quoted the man as talking to his own soul, as a Greek would, like Ulysses in the *Odyssey*. Of course, He meant that the man was Greek; but how should any Hebrew orator know how Ulysses, King of Ithaca, spoke? The thing has the flavor of the caravansary

about it, the tang of camp-fire smoke, the tinkle of a lyre and the remembered singing of a half-blind, old, old man beside the fires of a caravan.

The Broken Gate

THE land round the Lake of Galilee was once the most densely peopled in the world, every inch irrigated. The sides of the high whale-backed mountains were terraced and planted half-way up with vine and olive, date and fig and pomegranate. Above the irrigation level nothing could grow but grass, and it was there the sheep pastures began.

Valleys and hillsides swarmed with children, but the high mountain-tops were lonely. It was an old, old country with all the timber cut off ages ago. Wood was costly, stone everywhere. Therefore every mountain-top held stone sheep-folds, very

ancient. They were large, for several flocks used each, and the gate was the only wooden thing about them.

One night a group of shepherds gathered round a big camp-fire outside the gate of one of these old sheep-folds. An awkward camel bringing up supplies had broken it, so the shepherds camped across it to keep sheep in and wolves out and make all sure. They had guests. A carpenter from the nearest village had come up to mend it and had brought his helper, a boy of fourteen. The shepherds signaled to those at the next fold, a mile or so away upon another shoulder of the hill, so some of them came over.

This was partly that they might hear the news of the day the carpenter had brought, but partly that they might join in a feast. The chief shepherd, with bread and a skin of wine, a stew of meat and lentils, and a few dates and figs, had made a little feast, because one of his sheep had failed to come back at dusk and he and the boy and one or two of the other shepherds had gone out and found it. Supper over, he called the

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boy and seated him in the ring beside the camp-fire, where all could see.

"Tell them about the lost sheep," he said.

That a boy should speak before men was contrary to custom. But the chief shepherd of a fold must be obeyed, so the boy told them with quiet boyish courtesy how the count had fallen short and he had asked permission to go out upon the hunt with torches. They had traced back the path of the flock, calling and listening, and had heard the sheep at last bleating from where it was caught among thorn-bushes. They were but just in time. Something gray and dim, with blazing eyes, slunk into the shadows as they came up. The sheep was but a lamb and very weary, so the chief shepherd himself untangled it and laid it on his own shoulders and brought it home, and then he made the feast.

It was a thrice-familiar story simply told, new only to the teller, but every man who heard it noted the boy and felt that the chief shepherd had some reason to put him forward and would give it in due time. When he sat down, the talk drifted from tale to

tale through immemorial stories of the East. It came at last to the Messiah, the promised Lion of the Tribe of Judah who shall convert and rule the world. Then they spoke of that white night, fourteen years before, when shepherds gathered round Megdol-Edar, the old, old watch-tower of the flock of Israel that Abraham built, and saw angels who told them the Messiah was born in Bethlehem.

They all agreed it was a pity Herod killed him, and, agreeing also that the prophecies were unshakable, believed that probably He would be born again and soon, for the time given in the prophet Daniel was almost gone. Had He lived He would be about the age of this boy, Jesus Bar David, the carpenter's helper.

When they mentioned the white night, Joseph and Jesus exchanged looks, and Joseph shook his head. The boy, therefore, was silent, though full of interest. The talk drifted to the Romans and their idolatry, then to their mode of fighting, which was to destroy all crops and starve out the enemy, so that he who conquered them would need some new and unknown way to

feed his troops. Then they talked of world dominion after the Messiah came. At last the boy spoke:

"My Masters?"

"What is it, son?"

"Is not the greatest conqueror Death and the greatest tyranny the grave? Would not the greatest deliverer be he who released his people from sin and death, who went beyond the grave and brought back the people there?"

The saying was variously received. Some looked at others and shook their heads. One tapped his forehead. After a pause, Neri, the chief shepherd, said:

"Not Cæsar, not Hannibal, not even the great Alexander himself, who wept for worlds to conquer, ever conceived so great a thought as that. To conquer both worlds —to rule both sides of the grave—to free the living and add the dead to one's dominion! Son, let us go to bed, for only God could do it and He has not."

Next morning, very early, Joseph, the carpenter, finished and hung the gate. The other shepherds had gone with their flocks,

but Neri, the chief shepherd, lingered with Simon, the gate-keeper, paid Joseph and saw him off.

" 'Tis a good job," said Simon, inspecting the new gate; "a royal good job."

"And should be," said Neri, "for a king made it."

"What mean you?"

"Joseph, the carpenter, is Joseph, son of David, the rightful King of Israel."

"Then the boy is——"

"The boy Jesus, who wants to conquer both worlds and free the dead as well as the living, is the young Messiah, whom Herod did not kill."

The Good Shepherd

THE great whale-backed hills of Galilee rose high above irrigation level and were connected by ridges, so that the most thickly populated country in the world held long, narrow, almost uninhabited hilltops, communicating with one another and leading to the desert. Never was such convenience for mixing wild animals with people. The desert wolves could penetrate, as if by lanes, into the heart of the most crowded districts, with open safe retreat back to the wilderness again. Their only danger was the packs of half-wild dogs that sometimes came up from the teeming cities of the lowlands to kill sheep.

The sheep had to be on the hilltops, for the only grass was there. The country was so thickly peopled and so intensely gardened that it grudged room even for houses, yet needed meat and wool. There were as many sheep as the hills could hold. They were fed and folded in winter in the lowlands; so only men with irrigated fields could own them. Such men mostly stayed below, sending up hired shepherds to the hilltops. Now and then a man would shepherd his own sheep. These made the best shepherds.

Lonely as were the high sheep-downs, they were crossed by paths from town to town. Nestled just above irrigation level, tucked into every cove in the hills, was a great village or a little city, and short-cuts and mountain footways led to each over the high windy ridges. These paths went out of their way to pass springs, for it was an old, old country, and every spring was known and marked and needed. The sheep had to come to the springs every day for water, so, in spite of the loneliness of the upper levels, travelers and shepherds came often into contact.

One summer morning in the year fifteen A.D., a man and a boy approached a spring on one of these high pathways. By dress they were Galileans, by the tools they carried, carpenters. The path they followed led to Nazareth. Coming from the heights they could look down upon the spring and see a couple of flocks following two shepherds and meeting there.

But they saw more. Behind a boulder on their side, and out of sight from the shepherds, was a wolf. Just as they made him out the sheep winded him and crowded away. Seeing this, he sprang over the boulder and charged the flock. Both shepherds shouted, but the wolf came on. Then both shepherds ran—one of them away from the wolf, the other toward him.

What followed was almost too quick to see. The man struck at the wolf with his staff and missed. The wolf sprang at the man's throat, and they went down together. There would have been a bloody tragedy but for a quick ringing shout from the boy. The wolf heard, dropped tail and ruff and slunk away, and the shepherd put hand to

throat and lay still. The man and boy hurried down and bent over him. He lay with eyes closed and throat bleeding, but his cloak had saved him and he would live.

"'Tis a bad wound," said the man.

"No, not so bad," said the boy. "See."

He went to the spring, dipped the end of a cloth in water and washed off the blood.

The shepherd opened his eyes. With two or three deft touches the boy bound the torn throat, and the man rose.

"I have not missed my blow with the staff these three years," said the shepherd. "My foot slipped. Thanks, therefore, for life itself."

"You need a better weapon than a staff to guard sheep," said the carpenter.

"I have it—prayer to the God of Israel. You see, I am not dead. He sent you in good time. I have nothing to offer you but a sheep. But, in sign of my gratitude, take one of them."

"Nay, we will not take what you risk your life for. You are a good shepherd. Farewell. But why did you stay and the other man run?"

"My sheep are my own. He is a hireling."

Alphæus' Farm

THE plain of Gennesaret is a dreary place now, with no trees, no houses and no inhabitants except a few goats and their goatherds. But the traces of the old irrigation ditches are there, and the ancient rabbis wrote of it as more thickly populated than many cities and as their ideal of Paradise.

Here Alphæus Cleopas owned forty jugera—a little more than twenty acres. He had four sons, James and Joses and Simon and Jude. James, who would inherit the land, had small taste for farming, so Joses took care of the farm. Alphæus Cleopas, to give occupation to his other sons, made partnership with a man named Zebedee and ran

a fishing boat on the lake. All this is record; for the land came at last to Jude, whose two grandchildren were arrested and released a century after by an Emperor. So the matter got into Roman history.

The reason that James did not care for farming and that an Emperor bothered about Jude's grandchildren, was that they were the true heirs of David, the first king of the country. To be accurate, James was not the heir at first. That honor belonged to Jesus Bar David, his cousin. But James was near enough to the line to feel unwilling to settle down on a farm.

Of course the country was in the hands of the Romans and the whole family were peasants, but being princely peasants the parents saw to it that they knew each other. The Romans were none too firmly seated on the throne, and anything might happen.

Irrigated land in Gennesaret was planted mostly in trees—five acres of figs would liberally support a family. But an acre or two of wheat was also part of the crop of every farm. It was a point of honor for a landowner to raise his own bread, just as

it was a point of honor to visit relatives, and to spend two weeks every year in the great city when the spring planting was done. Jesus Bar David lived nearly twenty miles away at a place called Branchtown, where the main north and south road of the district crossed the main trail east and west. Once a year or so he came over. He was a slim boy of about eighteen, nearly Jude's age, but quiet and observant.

It was breakfast-time on a spring morning, and they were all out under the fig trees by the house, having returned a couple of days before from their annual two-week trip to the city. The next day Jesus would go to Branchtown and the boys take out their boat on the lake. The girls had cleared the food away, and all were chatting when Joses came in from the wheat-field, very angry.

"What is it, Joses?" said James.

"Somebody has sown tares in the wheat. It must be that rascal Ayoub I caught stealing figs from the drying-trays last year and horsewhipped."

"Are you sure?"

"About Ayoub, no. About the tares, yes,

worse luck. Here is a sprout of wheat I pulled up and here is a tare. See the difference. The whole field is full of darnell—tares—false wheat."

They trooped through the figs and the vineyard to the wheat-field. There was no doubt about it. There were too many tares for accident.

"An enemy has done this," said James. "What shall we do about it, Joses?"

"Nothing, unless we can prove who did it. You can't weed a wheat-field. We must let all get ripe together. Then we must reap it, stalks and all. Then we shall sort out the tares, tie them together and burn them, and the wheat we shall put in the barn."

Years later Jesus Bar David became the greatest man the world has ever seen. When asked once what He would do to separate His faithful from His unfaithful followers He answered, "Nothing—yet. You can't weed wheat. But," He said, "when harvest comes we shall tie the tares in bundles and burn them, and the wheat we shall gather into barns."

The Young Master

JOHN BAPTIST and Our Lord were cousins: second cousins, most likely, for the word used in the New Testament where it says that their mothers were kin may mean "second cousins," and probably does. Whether first cousins or second, they were regarded by their parents as practically brothers, because the birth of both had been announced by angels. Therefore they were thrown together as much as John's very drastic training would allow. Although he could not visit Jesus because he was a Nazarite, Jesus could visit John as a boy and did, for John recognized him, although apparently with difficulty, when they met as men.

John was a member of a group of men called Nazarites who lived a very simple life in caves in the rocks on the side of the desert.

It was inevitable that John should invite Jesus to visit him in one of the caves—they called them "schools"—of the Nazarites and inevitable that Jesus should come. Palestine was so small, the desert was so near it everywhere, that the school must have been less than a day's journey from that Judean hill town where John's father, Zacharias the priest, lived. The entrance was in a dry ravine in that water-carved chaos of gully-bitten cliffs, which makes the western wall above the Dead Sea.

The limestone precipices are full of great caves there still, carefully hidden. Therefore Zacharias must have sent a servant with Jesus as guide, and the servant must have carried the customary present. A basket of fruit would be the most acceptable. Zacharias was able to have a servant and send presents. As a priest of the Temple he was a well-to-do man, with the ancient equivalent of a modern four thousand a year.

Descending the ravine they were, of course, challenged by a hidden watcher on the cliff-side, the lad Jesus was received with a promise to return him under guidance in due time, and Jonas the servant sent back. Then the watcher would appear, high on the ledge half-way up the cliff, and direct the lad to a path hidden behind a boulder on the left. All Nazarites looked alike, lean, sunburned, sinewy from cliff climbing and temperate fare, their sunbleached hair twisted about their heads for a turban, their sunbleached beards straggling free, and about their middles a camel's-hair cloth woven not by the oasis people but by the free Arabs of the sand desert.

At the ledge, hidden behind another boulder, was a cave mouth. The lad would be halted there, while John Nazarite and the head man of the school were sent for and came.

"Hail, Jesus."

"Greeting, John."

"This is Simon, my teacher."

"The peace of God be on thee, Simon."

The two lads were about sixteen and

looked much alike, except for dress. Simon was over sixty, with a stalwart yet humble dignity about him that would have been hard to match among a million. John chafed visibly that Jesus had given blessing to him, instead of receiving it. At last he asked:

"What now, Simon?"

"Rest, water, grapes from the basket. Then lead him to the heights and show our country."

"Nay, lead now. I need no rest, having come slowly."

John did not move and Simon turned to him in question.

"Why, Simon, he is but my distant cousin, younger than I. Your pardon that he gives orders."

"So may he be in the oasis, John, where men are blind. But here he is King David's equal, because he is his heir and therefore our prince and yours. Obey."

"So—so be it. Come, Jesus."

The path led upward through the cave, then outward to a ledge of rock, then up again to a jutting point from which one can

look out upon the strangest scene in Asia. There is no other valley in all the world so deep below sea level. The Dead Sea, a lake of angry-blue, alkali water, lies in what is now a sunken strip of yellow desert, but was then a plain, lush, green, irrigated and most beautiful. The raw red hills of Moab rise on its eastern flank, and all the wonders of the sunrises above them seem faded into the scarred battlements to stay forever. Desert air over irrigated land is the clearest in the world, and everything below stands out in lucid minuteness, like a cameo.

The two lads looked long, and John pointed out places, here and there, where things had happened. One place especially, far down near the Dead Sea shore, held their attention, for there the Nazarites had slain a she bear and her cubs, that wandered in from the eastern wilderness and around the south end of the sea. They used their girdles. John took the girdle from his waist and showed it. It was really a sling, two leather thongs with a soft leather pocket between them.

The Nazarites' sling was a deadly

weapon. With it they could slay Roman soldiers in full armor and sometimes did, striking them in the face. But as the Nazarites were peaceful, pledged to fight only to save life in self-defense, this seldom happened. The bear attacked them only because they were young. Had one of the elder brethren been with them she would have fled.

"Why?" asked Jesus.

"I do not yet know why," John answered. "Or, rather, I suspect and must not tell. The elder brethren have certain powers, gained by fasting, prayer, and perfect health of mind and body."

"If you must not tell, John, I must not ask. But is there no one who could tell if he thought best?"

"Simon, my teacher, is ruler of the whole community and decides who shall receive instruction."

The two lads turned to Simon, who stood close behind them listening, with a quiet smile, to their talk.

"Simon," said Jesus, "you modern Nazarites are sons of the ancient Schools of the

Prophets. There must be wisdom come down from Elijah and his followers."

"We are bound under oath to silence."

"You hold me king?"

"I do, sir."

"My word, you said, is law?"

"Within these caves it is."

"Could it suspend your oath?"

"Why ask? For vanity? For jest? For love of power?"

"For love of knowledge, Simon, as I asked once the doctors of the Temple."

"So be it, sir. May I call council of the brethren?"

"Not so, for if the king's word have power to suspend your oath you know it now. If it have no such power, I would not press you."

"Young sir, such power it has. Do you recall how Saul was numbered with the prophets? But therein, to one all unprepared, lies danger. Do you recall how, later, Saul was troubled by an evil spirit? He learned the power in part, without the safeguards."

"Give me the safeguards also."

"Long they are, long, and slow."

"Perhaps I have them, Simon. Look steadily into my eyes. What see you?"

There was a moment's pause, while the old man and the lad looked into each other's eyes. John sensed the passing of power from one to the other. Then Simon lifted his hand in slow salute.

"My Lord," he said, "you have prayed much and long and fasted often and are clean, through and through; and God is with you. Yet must I call council, not for decision but that in due form you may be admitted. John, take him to a cell and leave him there, that he may pray."

Men were made Nazarites at their own desire, by taking the oath before any priest of the Temple. Children could be made Nazarites by their parents taking the oath for them, as Zacharias had done for John. There was no initiation. Yet to join one of the "schools," to become a member of an organized community and learn the wisdom passed down by tradition, was a different thing. For that, formal initiation was required. Nobody now knows what it was

exactly, though we have the general outlines and even, by tradition, some of the details. In common with the other like initiations in Egypt, Syria and Greece, it included a representation of a death—the death of God who yet was a man—and of His resurrection, and so was an acted lesson that when God in due time moved to save mankind He would take upon Him man's flesh and die and rise again. Thus it was a prophecy of the Messiah.

We have no actual proof that Jesus took it. Scripture is silent on this subject. We only know that He and John knew each other in such a way that He must have visited John after John's training began, and that here and there in Jesus' later speeches, He seems to allude to fragments of the ceremony. This no man can quite prove, because the ceremony itself is unknown except in outline. But we *do* know that because He was heir of David's house He had the right to take it without the previous oath of the Nazarite.

A vast cavern in the heart of a great limestone crag. A group of silent men. The

light of smoking torches. A quiet council followed by the withdrawal of the lesser brethren. An invocation of the One God of Israel. Then the stupendous ceremony itself, followed by days of wise instruction and explanation from the head of the community—these pictures steal across the mind.

A very quiet lad returned into the land of men and cities, there to ponder for years on the teaching and expand it and go far beyond it; and to experiment for years with methods of making Himself a channel for God's power, handed down from the old prophets of God in Israel, and to supply their missing element and to improve them. Again there is no proof. He gave no details. He only said His miracles were wrought through His human nature and not through His Divine. But the key-word of the method He *did* give, and that word is—Prayer.

Rival Yoke-Makers

NAZARETH was a good-sized village where a great north-and-south road crossed a great east-and-west one. A great many people bought things there. The farmers from quite a stretch of country came in and got supplies.

In that country very few farmers plowed with horses. They cost too much. A good horse was worth more than a small house. They used pairs of great soft-eyed shamble-footed oxen instead.

Now, oxen are harnessed by means of yokes—wooden yokes. A rough yoke of the wrong shape will make the neck of any ox sore. It must be smoothed and scraped and

shaped just right or it will do harm, for an ox with a sore neck can not pull well. So yoke-making was a very useful art; and those carpenters who were useful at it were skilful people.

One of the carpenters in Nazareth was specially skilled in yoke-making. He spoke about it once in a speech and some men who loved him wrote down what he said and put it in a book. He said: "My yoke is easy and my burden light." And he was right.

Houses in Nazareth were built of stone and mud—what the Mexicans call "adobe" and the streets were narrow. Jesus, the carpenter, who was a skilful yoke-maker, needed light, so He had to work with His door open, for adobe houses have very few windows. Everybody who came to Nazareth for yokes sooner or later passed through that open door.

Therefore another carpenter, whose name was Alkar and who also made yokes, decided to see if he could not get some of those people to come to him. His yokes were not so good as Jesus' yokes. They made the necks of the oxen that wore them sore, so

that, if you wanted to plow rough ground, you had to throw Alkar's yokes away and get others. But you could not tell that by looking at them. They looked as good as those that Jesus made, or even better, for Alkar put paint and little brass studs on the top of some of them.

When it fell vacant Alkar rented the house just across the narrow street from Jesus' shop and moved in. The street was so very narrow that he, too, had to work with his door open to get light. Therefore Jesus and Alkar, when they were at work, were within easy speaking-distance of each other.

Now, Alkar was an easy-going fellow. That was why he made bad yokes. He was too careless to shape and fit them properly. Jesus was not easy-going at all, but He was sorry for good-natured people who did not know their own business and would not learn. So He spoke pleasantly to Alkar, in spite of the fact that Alkar was trying to take his living away from him. After all, there was enough for both. He even pointed out the exact difference between His yokes and Alkar's, so that Alkar could

have made good yokes if he wanted to. But Alkar did not care.

Jesus liked Alkar, in spite of his happy-go-lucky worthlessness. Alkar did not know that he liked Jesus, because he was trying to hurt Him, but really Alkar liked Him very much. After all, Alkar was only happy-go-lucky. He was not really bad.

After a while Jesus of Nazareth closed up His carpenter-shop and went away, down to John Baptist's great camp-meeting at Bethabara. Before He went He showed Alkar again how to make good yokes and left him a yoke for a model; for He said that the great patient oxen must not suffer from sore shoulders because He went away. This time, Alkar was so glad that he was going to get all the business and so sorry that Jesus was going away that he paid attention and learned. Yoke-making is not really hard when some one who already knows is patient and will show you. So, from that time on, Alkar made good yokes. Then so many people came to him that he had to get an apprentice. And he taught the apprentice to make good yokes too.

Jesus was gone for a year, except for a few days when He came back to get His mother and His cousins and move them to Capernaum. He left a married cousin in His house. He had so many great and grand young men with Him, lieutenants of John Baptist, that Alkar had no chance to do more than tell Him that now the yokes were good.

At the end of the year He came back and preached in the Synagogue. Nobody liked what He said. It made them so angry that they wanted to kill Him. They tried to push Him off a precipice. Alkar held back and tried to stop them, because he liked Jesus and was not really bad—only happy-go-lucky about everything but yokes. He now made yokes carefully.

When Jesus found that His own old neighbors really wanted to kill Him He turned and looked at them. When they saw His face they fell back and let Him pass, because they were ashamed.

Jesus came to Nazareth a third time, almost a year later. Meanwhile, He had grown from an unknown preacher among

the hills to a great orator whom all the nation talked of. This time, they were afraid to try to hurt Him. They did not believe in Him, though. When He found this was true He gave them up and went away and never came back any more.

He could not do any mighty works when He was there, because they did not believe in Him; but He *did* make a few simple cures among old friends who were ill. Among these was Alkar. Jesus went back to look at His old shop. There He learned from His cousin that Alkar was sick of a fever. He went in and talked with Alkar and told him He was leaving town in a few minutes. Then He cured him.

Next morning Alkar tidied up his room and rolled up his bed. People in Palestine slept on quilts on the floor and rolled up their beds every morning, like soldiers, instead of making them. While doing this he found Jesus' haversack. Everybody who traveled on foot over Palestine then carried a basket-work haversack made out of flexible rushes and swung from the girdle on the left side. In it each carried all those

little personal things that a traveler needs. Therefore when any one lost his haversack he was very uncomfortable indeed.

Alkar could not imagine how a haversack could slip off a girdle when its handles were not broken, nor how anybody could walk away without noticing that his haversack was gone. Neither could he imagine how anybody could comfortably or conveniently travel and get on without a haversack. He felt energetic and perfectly well—better than he had for months. When people have been ill a little holiday often does them good. So he left his apprentice to keep open the shop and make yokes, while he took the haversack and set out to carry it back to Jesus.

Jesus, he learned, had halted on leaving town and had divided His twelve Apostles into six pairs. These He had sent off north, south, east, west, and in between, to heal the sick, cleanse lepers, cure the demonized, raise the dead and preach the Good News to poor people everywhere. Then Jesus had gone to Cana of Galilee, where Nathanael lived, because it was the nearest to

Nazareth of the home towns of the Apostles. His reason was that every man is useless in his own home town, because his own neighbors will not believe in him. So, while He sent the Twelve out over the country, He went to their home towns Himself. He was right, too.

The Scribes and Pharisees had followed Jesus. Alkar had found Him at Cana, in the middle of a group of Scribes and Pharisees who were trying to keep the people of Cana from bringing their sick to Him to be cured. Alkar waited until He had finished curing a baby who was partly blind, and then handed Him His haversack. Jesus, just then, had to lay hands on a lame boy, so He thanked Alkar and said: "Please hold it for me." Then Alkar had to stand and watch. Jesus kept Alkar standing an hour, holding the haversack. Alkar was willing enough, because he wanted to see the cures. They brought to Jesus the sick and the lame and the deaf and the halt and the blind, and He cured them, all of them, laying His hands on them and praying God.

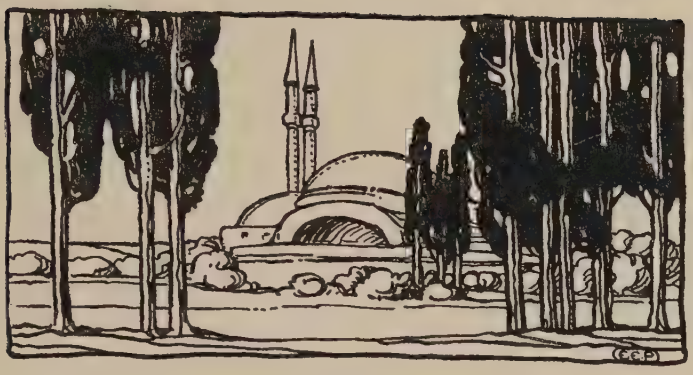
The Scribes and Pharisees were able to

keep a good many people away, persuading them that there was nothing good in the cures. Jesus was through in an hour instead of working at it all day, as He did in many places. During that hour Alkar had stood by and heard what was said and seen all that happened. Then one of the men who had been cured invited Jesus to dinner, and Jesus brought Alkar with Him and Alkar carried the haversack. After dinner Jesus set out to Bethsaida Julias, which was the town where Philip lived; and He invited Alkar to come with Him. So, all through the long golden afternoon, they walked and talked together. And Alkar still insisted on carrying the haversack.

Alkar never was one of the Disciples, exactly, but he never went home again. He was not one of the Twelve or even one of the Seventy, but he carried the haversack. He was at the Crucifixion and in the upper chamber with Thomas. He was with the five hundred brethren who saw the risen Jesus at one time on a mountain in Galilee. He was at the Ascension and at Pentecost. He lived for years afterward and told the

story of all this and turned many to righteousness. He died at last, crucified in Upper Egypt and, though he had given all Jesus' things to Mary Mother years before, he looked up just as he died and said:

"Lord, here is your haversack."



Chuza's Boy Simon

MAGNIFICENT Herod of Galilee was called "Tetrarch" instead of king. Yet in every way except the name, he was a king and a great one. He was the richest man in the world except the Roman Emperor. His little country was crowded with large cities which paid him tribute. He had an army, a court and two or three dozen palaces and made wars when he wished, like any king.

To handle this enormous income and care for the tremendous business of ruling a dozen great cities and a hundred smaller ones with their villages, took work, heavy, long, grinding, hard work. Herod was much too lazy and too fond of a good time to do

this work himself. He had somebody do it for him. The man who did this work had to be a very able and a very honest man. Of course, he grew to be a very powerful and important man. Anybody would, when a dozen cities of a hundred thousand people each had to take his orders. In fact, he was the real Tetrarch. He had to do what Herod told him, but Herod did not know enough about it and was too busy having a good time to tell much.

This man's name was Chuza, and he was called "steward." Chuza, Herod's steward, was married to a very lovely lady. As Herod moved around from palace to palace all over Galilee and Perea, Chuza moved too. But he had a home of his own and spent as much time as he could there. This home was in Capernaum, and it was the real center of Herod's government. Chuza had to be gone most of the time, but his wife stayed there all she could. Every lady likes to have her own house. Herod's court was not a nice place for a good woman, anyhow. So it was certainly no place to bring up a boy.

You see, they had a boy. His name is not in the Book, but it was probably Simon, because about one boy in five in all Galilee was named Simon. His mother's name is in the Book. It was Johanna. In a way Simon was brought up at Herod's court, because he had to be there very often. In another way he was not, because his father and mother kept him away from court and in their house at Capernaum as much as they dared. Herod's court was full of great ladies with whom you had to mind your manners, and you must keep dressed up all the time. Also, the court was full of chorus-girls. Both the great ladies and the chorus-girls kissed Simon and cuddled him, because his father was the second greatest man in all the kingdom. It was very embarrassing, and Simon quite agreed with his parents that court was no place for a small boy, though he knew how to behave very politely, and could act as his father's page as well as any one if there were need.

The house at Capernaum was a much pleasanter place to live in than the court. There were many servants, because Chuza

was very rich. Some of the servants were policemen, because Chuza's enemies would kidnap Simon if they could. So there were too many people around. Yet it was a beautiful place, with the lake in front and enough orchard behind it to run and play and even to ride a pony in. If little Simon Bar Chuza could have had a lot of brothers and sisters, he would have liked it very much. As it was he was often happy. But he was lonely, in spite of so many grown people, because there were no children.

Simon Bar Chuza was not a little prince, but he might as well have been. He was brought up as carefully as if he were packed in cotton wool. It was really remarkable that anything bad could get at him at all, even an illness. But it did.

When Simon was about twelve years old he suddenly began to grow. From a little boy, sturdy as a knot of olive-wood, he grew to be a tall boy, thin and delicate. Then he fell ill.

The trouble was typhoid fever. It is a wonder that everybody in Palestine did not die of typhoid, considering their customs.

However, they were exposed to it so often that nearly everybody grew immune. Of course they did not call it "typhoid." They called it "burning fever." The rabbis said it was caused by very many small devils who lived within the patient as in a house. Sometimes they let some of the sick person's blood run out and sometimes they gave him sage-brush tea. The best treatment they had was to tie an iron-handled knife to a thorn bush with a lock of the sick person's hair and say a verse of the Bible over it every day for a week, and then cut down the bush. As more sick children got well with that treatment than with any other, it was used for Simon Bar Chuza. But when the bush with his knife tied to it was cut down, Simon did not get well. Then the doctors did not know what to do.

Some days before they had sent for Chuza, Simon's father, and all the business of governing six million people had to wait or be done by some one else, because one little boy was ill. Chuza sat by Simon's bed most of the time, but Simon did not know him. The rest of the time Chuza slept a little or

walked up and down or talked to the doctors.

When none of the doctors could think of anything else to do and all of them were quite sure that little Simon would die,

Chuza called them together and asked if there were any great rabbi whose prayers might save. They could think of none except the great Rabbi Gamaliel at Jerusalem, and it was too late to send for him.

At last one young doctor spoke—all the doctors were ministers and all the ministers

were doctors then—and said that the people coming back from Jerusalem told about a young man who had cured a great many sick people at that place by praying for them. This young man had come back from Jerusalem and was now in Galilee and not very far from Capernaum.

Then Chuza was very glad and thanked God out loud. He ordered out his horse and a body-guard of soldiers, and he took a spare horse with a grand saddle and a gold bit to its bridle for the Rabbi to ride. He galloped as fast as he could to the village in Galilee where the Rabbi was preaching. He had no doubt that the Rabbi would come, for Chuza was the greatest man in all Galilee, next to Herod, and could make anybody do anything he wanted.

The young Rabbi was walking through the country, preaching in the market-places and staying in a different town every day. It did not take Chuza long to find him though, because he scattered his soldiers right and left and had them ask the head men of all the villages and gallop back with the news.

Chuza was not a proud man. Able and efficient people who get work done never are. They have too much common sense. Yet even Chuza was astonished and not at all pleased when he found that the young Rabbi did not want to come. He saw that the young Rabbi was poor; and a poor man ought to be delighted to come to a grand house and cure the son of so great a man as Herod's steward. The young Rabbi was merciful, and any merciful man ought gladly to hurry to cure a sick boy. Also, the time was short. The boy was dying. One by one, like drops of molten gold from a tilted crucible, his minutes passed. Soon there would be no more. There was no time to argue.

"Oh, hurry," pounded Chuza's heart. "Oh, hurry, hurry."

Chuza was an experienced man, a wise man, used to dealing with many, many people. He had learned, among other things, that it does not often pay to get excited, even when your heart pounds. Besides, he had to make sure that the Rabbi really *could* cure Simon. He was so dis-

tressed that the Rabbi took pity on him.

"There is no need for me to go with you, Chuza," he said. "God can cure the little lad in answer to our prayers, if we pray here. Must you see signs and wonders before you believe?"

"Oh, hurry, Sir," said Chuza, "before the boy dies."

Then Jesus of Nazareth—that was the young Rabbi's name—looked into Chuza's eyes. And Chuza, because he was a good man and the ablest in Galilee, was able to look back for a while, though at last he had to turn away. Jesus said, "Go home. The boy will live."

Chuza was not a soldier, though, among other duties, he had commanded whole regiments of soldiers. This time he acted exactly as a soldier would, because there seemed something of discipline about it. He drew himself up and said, "Thank you, Sir," and saluted as a soldier would have done. He then turned and went quietly away.

The men who came with him had fresh swift horses ready, because they thought he

would want to ride back to the boy as fast as they could gallop. Instead he stayed all night at the house of the head man of the village, and rode home quietly the next morning.

He invited the Rabbi's followers to come with him. Simon the Zealot, and Jude the Jolly, and James, their brother, rode back with him, for they lived in Capernaum, and when he offered to lend them horses they jumped at the chance of coming home in such grand company. Simon Peter and Andrew, his brother, lived in Capernaum also, and would have loved to come riding home in that grand cavalcade. They were fishermen and so did not know how to ride, while the three brothers, having been reared on a farm, were familiar with horses.

About the middle of the morning Chuza saw a pillar of dust in the distance. It was a mounted messenger, tearing along as fast as his horse could gallop. The men with Chuza thought it must be news that Simon was dead, but Chuza was not troubled. The messenger tore up to Chuza and stopped, so suddenly that his horse slid on all four feet.

He raised his hand straight up in the joy sign and shouted:

"The Little Master is out of danger!"

Then everybody began to cheer, for they all loved the Little Master. When they had quieted, Chuza asked:

"When did he begin to get well?"

"Suddenly, yesterday afternoon, an hour before sunset."

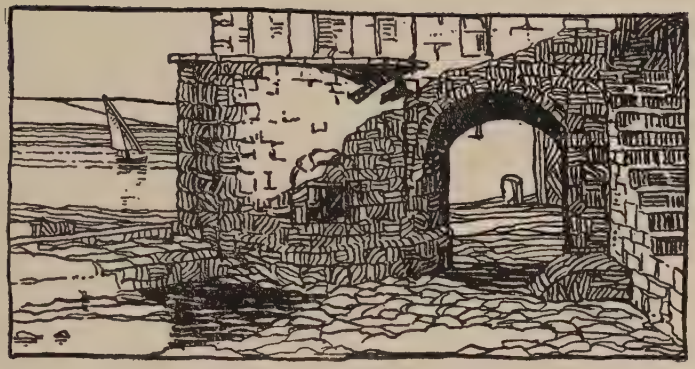
Everybody looked at one another and nodded, for that was the hour when Chuza talked with Jesus.

When Jesus came to Capernaum, Chuza and Johanna brought Simon to thank Him, and they all knelt at His feet. They tried to give Him something else besides thanks—money or something, for they were very rich—but He smiled and shook His head. From that time on, all the head men of all the villages in Galilee had orders from Chuza that if Jesus of Nazareth wanted anything He should have it. Johanna went to one of the followers of Jesus and gave him a great purse of money and begged him, as a favor to her, to see that Jesus always had food to eat, and warm clothes, and a

place in which to sleep. It did less good than she hoped, because the follower, whose name was Judas, stole most of the money. Still it did help a little, because he did not dare to steal it quite all.

After the Resurrection, Chuza and Johanna and Simon all became Christians. The Book does not say what became of Simon, but there is a legend. Matthew the Publican stayed fourteen years in Jerusalem, after Pentecost, organizing the business end of the Church and the bookkeeping, for he was their only business man. Then, when everything was running smoothly and the Seven Servers could take care of all there was to do, Matthew the Publican grew restless, and took his staff in his hand, and set out northeastward, along the three-thousand-year-old caravan trail to China, preaching Jesus of Nazareth to the merchants in every city. I have always hoped that Simon the son of Chuza went with him.

Anyhow, there was a great Christian Church in Turkestan for centuries later, and a Christian king. Somebody had brought many there to Christ.



The Good Fisherman

FISHERMEN are poor in money, but they own all outdoors.

A purse-net differs from a seine because it can be used in deep water. It takes two boats: the large net-boat, which pays out the net and the smaller stake-boat which holds one net-end. When the two come together and the net is joined, you draw in the rope at the lower edge like an old-fashioned purse-string, closing the net at the bottom and turning it into a bag.

The fishing-firm of Zebedee and Jonasson had caught nothing. Nothing, that is, but a pinnacle of rock which tore their nets. They were very tired, but tackle must be

mended while wet. So they went ashore at dawn, spread it on the steep beach and went to work. There was Simon Stone, Andrew Jonasson his brother, James and John Zebedee, and old man Zebedee their father, and two hired men. They finished at last, and were thinking of home, when Jesus Bar David, walking back along the beach from Magdala, rounded the point.

As usual, there was a great crowd with Him. When they begged a speech, He boarded the stake-boat, got His friend Captain Simon Stone to push out to the middle of the cove and hold her there, and spoke like a man speaking to the galleries from the stage of a theater. It was one of His favorite modes of address, for no one could press upon Him and crowd Him. When the speech was done He turned to Captain Simon and said:

"Let down your nets for a draught."

"Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing. Nevertheless, I will haul the net."

Hauling a purse-net is an elaborate act. You have to pile the net in just the right

way on the extra-broad stern-sheets of the net-boat, then row in a circle which is neither too big nor too little, while two men pass the net over the stern and two more pull against it and hold the stake-boat steady with the oars. Then you must pull the purse-line, not too fast or you frighten the fish nor too slow or you lose them. Then you must haul the whole thing into the boat, take out the fish and straighten the net.

Captain Simon called his men. They ran the stern of the net-boat ashore, took the net aboard, then cast it. The Master told them just where. When they hauled in they had enclosed so great a multitude of fishes that the net began to break and they had to call the stake-boat up because the net-boat could not hold all without sinking.

In the excitement that followed, with the fish drumming with their tails and the remnants of the crowd ashore shouting, the Master turned to Captain Simon Stone and his brother Andrew and said, "Follow me."

It was the formula by which a partizan leader appointed staff-officers.

To Simon Stone's eternal credit, he did

not think himself fit for the place. He said:

"Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord."

"You are a good fisherman—with my help. Come with me and I will teach you how to catch men. Andrew, come also."

After all, it was the King's business to choose whom He wished. Simon and Andrew came. The net-boat had pushed ashore for better stowage of their great load of fish. Simon and Andrew, with our Lord, now landed from the stake-boat. As they walked up the beach past the net-boat He said to James and John, the sons of Zebedee:

"Follow me."

They did so, leaving their father with the hired servants of the boat's crew. We hear much of Apostles who followed. Somebody ought to say something of old Zebedee, who gave his sons for his King. Jesus led the four stalwart young fishermen up the beach, and Zebedee, of the type of all parents whose sons enter the ministry, watched them go and then gave his mind to running his fishing crew without them. Jesus had caught four men, or, perhaps, five.

Captain Simon

THE fishing firm of Zebedee and Jonasson had a boat on the Lake of Galilee. It was lateen-rigged, decked fore and aft, but open in the middle, pulled six or eight oars, had very wide stern-sheets for convenience in piling nets, and must have been of two or three tons burden, for it once carried fourteen men or more without being overloaded. Simon Bar Jonas was skipper and his brother Andrew mate, James and John Bar Zebedee with others were the crew, and there was a boy whose name we do not know for cook and caretaker. Cooking, by the way, was done on a charcoal furnace.

The boat had a large leather cushion for

the helmsman to sit on, for it is mentioned that Jesus once used this cushion as a pillow when He slept. In the early part of His ministry He used this boat as a refuge quite often. It enabled Him to get away from the crowd whenever He wished to have a quiet talk with the Apostles: and particularly, it took Him out of that atmosphere of hatred which came from the Jerusalem Committee of Scribes and Pharisees sent by the Sanhedrin—the National Legislature—to follow Him and oppose His work.

As this committee was intelligent and efficient it must have tried to come on board the boat. Its members could not willingly have left so large a portion of His time unwatched. They did not succeed or it would have been recorded. On Simon Bar Jonas as skipper fell the duty of keeping them away. Simon was a good man and later a devout one; but his very strong, violent language, which he had not yet wholly given up at this time, has become proverbial throughout Christendom.

Every time a new set of Scribes and Pharisees came down from the great city they nat-

urally tried to get aboard the boat and Captain Simon Stone stopped them.

Every fishing-boat carried a boy as cook and caretaker, and the boy on any boat was source of half the trouble there and of nine-tenths of the mischief.

One day the big net-boat of the fishing-firm of Zebedee and Jonasson lay at the dock of Capernaum with the skipper and a couple of the crew aboard waiting for the Master, when the boat's boy, who had been absent on errands of his own, came running down the dock and shouted:

"Oh, Captain, Captain Simon!"

"What is it, you young limb?"

"Captain Simon, please, I'm not joking. They're coming."

"You're always joking, son. I'd take it out of you with a rope's end if it were not that the Master likes you. Who are coming?"

"Rabbi Hillel Bar Jochab, and Teriah the Scribe, and half a dozen new Scribes and Pharisees from Jerusalem. They ask along the water-front for you."

"You young idiot, did you tell them where we are?"

"Indeed I didn't, but they may have followed me."

The boy jumped aboard and dived under the half-deck as the safest place from which to enjoy the coming scene. Men on the neighboring boats stuck their heads out of their cabins and got ready, for Captain Simon had had a reputation along the water-front before he met the Master.

In a few minutes a stately group arrived—really stately, for any Oriental rabbi in his robes is a dignified figure, and these

were men of personal reputation and ability. The Sanhedrin used no others. They were bearded, and each man's long hair was held back by a leather circlet holding a square leather box as big as a thimble in the middle of the forehead. Their richly embroidered rabbi's shawls, elaborately tasseled and fringed, enveloped them like military cloaks, and there was an air of real dignity and definite authority about them all. Their leader spoke:

"Hail, Simon Bar Jonas. We are told that the Master sails in your boat and that, in a few minutes, you will take Him across the lake. Is it true?"

"It is true."

"Then stand aside that we may come aboard."

"Why should you come aboard, most courteous strangers?"

"Because He is coming, of course. We are sent by the Sanhedrin to observe Him. How can we do so if He cross the lake without us? Therefore, in the name of the Sanhedrin, stand aside."

Simon appeared to meditate a moment,

and the heads in the other fishing boats rose an inch or two, while the boy under the fore-peak stifled his amusement with a squeak. Then Simon said:

"In the name of the makers of the Sanhedrin, No! Oh, proud Pharisees, penurious pilgrims, economical investigators, stingy spies, grasping, greedy, grudging rich men, hire a boat for yourselves. Draw out a denarius now, produce a penny, grip it until the head of Cæsar on it opens his mouth in agony and groans in unison with you, and pay it over to the first captain of a craft who will soil his decks with cattle."

The group recoiled as if before a furnace blast. They had never mixed with the free Galilean fishermen before, but had been used to deference all their lives and could not understand its opposite. Then Teriah the Scribe, controlling himself with an effort, answered proudly:

"We are the High Priest's agents."

"And the High Priest Caiaphas is son-in-law and agent to Annas, that old man who loves money, and Annas is agent for the money-changers, and the money-changers

are agents for the publicans and the publicans for the Romans and the Romans for the Devil."

"Sedition, heresy, blasphemy!"

"And truth, plain truth! Is it not enough that you badger my Master on land, pervert His parables, malign His miracles, slander His sayings and call His conclusions accursed but you must try to force yourselves into the only place where He can get a breath of fresh air purified from your presence? Agents of anger, servants of suspicion, lying legates, ambassadors of avarice, away! Keep off my boat and the clean water. When God gave the earth to man He kept the sea. Therefore walk."

"Fisherman, your Master touched a leper and you touched your Master. The Sanhedrin in its mercy did not proceed against you, but you are legally a leper. Should we invoke the law——"

"Hillel Bar Jochab, I have healed lepers."

"Thou hast a devil."

"Hillel Bar Jochab, I have cast out devils. Shall I cast one out of you?"

"Thou canst not."

"True, too true. He is too deeply seated. Listen, you long robed, greasy ringleted rabbis with the law bound on your foreheads in a phylactery and left out of your hearts——"

"Go it, Captain Simon."

"Andrew, cuff me that boy on the ear.—Accursed cursers—con—con—drat the boy, he has spoiled as pretty a piece of eloquence as ever blossomed on a fishing boat."

"Silence, mad Galilean!"

In the moment's stillness that followed while Simon was gathering himself for another effort, a lithe, light-moving young man like a panther came swiftly to the group and spoke:

"The Master cometh. He said, 'Curse not,' Simon."

"Not one profane word have I uttered, John. Ask Andrew. Ask any of the men around. It is true that such was once mine infirmity, but this time I have but gently hinted to these rabbis possessed of devils that our boat will be quite full and if they came aboard we would be crowded."

Here and there suppressed applause came

from the surrounding boats, for Jews of Jerusalem were not popular in Galilee, and the Master had endeared Himself to practically every boatman on the lake by the cure of relatives or at least by a pleasant word of greeting.

"Only one of them hath a devil, Simon—the man with the eyes. The Master taught us the signs plainly enough. You ought to know them."

"Steady, man. Keep your own temper, John Lightning."

"What is it, children?"

On the bank above them stood the Master, surrounded by the Disciples, robed in white, quiet, kindly, majestic. He looked long and steadily at John Zebedee, then at Captain Simon, then at Rabbi Hillel Bar Jochab and the Pharisees. He did not say anything, nor did He expect an answer to His question. It had served its purpose by bringing uppermost in their minds the original cause of the dispute, and He read off their expressions and understood.

After a while Teriah the Scribe grew uneasy under the steady, searching, courteous

gaze. The other Pharisees wavered, too, as a regiment under fire wavers just before it breaks.

As for Rabbi Hillel, his extreme anxiety to be at ease made him doubly nervous. He stroked his beard jerkily, his eyes flickered, blazed and strayed, and his face twitched. At last, still with no word said, he turned and strode away, and the others herded after him, relieved but unhappy.

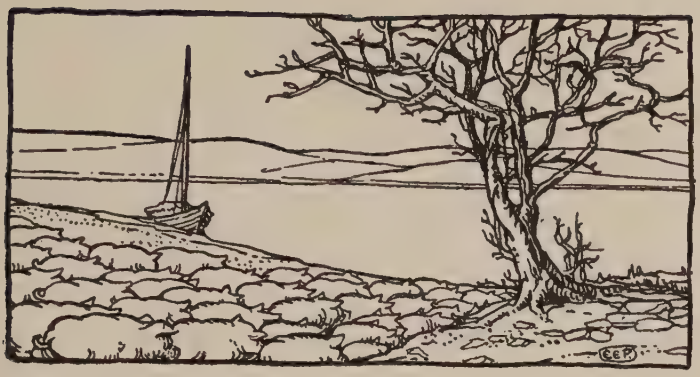
The fishermen in the neighboring boats began to laugh, then hushed, as the sense of a great moral crisis, come and gone, grew strong upon them. Then Captain Simon, rightly interpreting the sadness in the Master's eyes, asked:

"Why could you not cast out the evil spirit and cure him?"

"He did not know he needed cure. Therefore he had no faith, Cephas."

"Poor fellow," said John quietly, as the boat set sail.

"Yes," answered the Master, very gently, "poor fellow."



Legion

"HEY, Dan, come aboard. Captain Simon left me here to tend the boat, and I want to talk. I've seen one at last."

"One what?"

"One of Rabbi Jesus Bar David's miracles. It was a big one, too. Bigger than any you told."

"Bigger than curing the crazy man in the Synagogue? I saw that."

"Much bigger. You know that pestering bunch of theological professors from Jerusalem that bother the Master. They call Him crazy and twist everything He says when they quote it. Well, He got ahead of them yesterday. The crowd called for a

speech, so He got aboard the net-boat—our nets were drying ashore—and made us shove off. He didn't do a single thing but tell stories. The crowd didn't like it at first, but when they caught the idea, they were pleased as a camel with a corn-sack. When the Jerusalem bunch tried to twist a story, the crowd would say, 'He missed the point,' and laugh, and they had to hush. The boss —Captain Simon—and his brother Andrew got so tickled I thought they would break.

"When he had finished, the Master said, 'Take me to the Greeks across the lake.' So we up anchor, and a lot of other boats came too. We had no business to go because we carried nineteen men in a boat built for a crew of six; but whatever the Master tells you to do, you do it."

"Sure, Jim, I know. He told me to help a lame man once."

"It was dusk when we started, and soon it was dark except for the full moon. About the middle of the lake it came on to blow. You know the big squall we had last night, Dan?"

"Were you out in it? It thrashed half the pomegranates off our bush."

"It was worse on the lake. Most of the other boats made decent weather, but we were overloaded. She stuck her nose under instead of rising and shipped green seas until we were all a-wash. Captain Simon made us down sail and out oars, of course, but we were too crowded to pull well, and she shipped water faster than we could bail. I thought we were gone. She is a good boat, but she can't carry that crowd in a seaway. There were the twelve that go with the Master, and old man Zebedee and his crew, and four or five friends of Captain Simon. Half the lot were landsmen, scared and in the way.

"The only dry place was the stern-sheets. Captain Simon was there, steering and hardly able to keep his oar over the side; and the Master was there, asleep, with His head on the steersman's leather cushion Captain Simon passed over to Him. I heard the mate—that's Andrew Jonasson, you know—say that He had been up all the night before, talking to His mother, because

He had just got in from a trip to Nazareth. He never worried about the storm. He slept right along.

"I thought we would fill and roll over any minute. Old man Zebedee thought so too, and so did Captain Simon. I'd never seen either scared before. Of course, we knew the Master wouldn't drown—God would save Him somehow—but it looked bad for the rest of us. So Captain Simon roused Him. They all joined in, saying, 'Master, Master, wake up! We are sinking! Don't you care? Save us!'

"He stood up in the stern-sheets with the water-logged boat rolling like a sick horse; and, do you know, Dan, He wasn't thinking about the storm at all. He was wondering about us, why we were frightened. He couldn't understand how any of us thought we might drown when He was there. He said so. Then He looked up to windward and spoke to the storm, exactly as if it were a barking dog. He said, 'Hush! Be muzzled!' Then He lay down and went to sleep again."

"Went to—to sleep?"

"Yes, and the cold chills ran up and down my back, for the storm obeyed Him just like a dog and hushed. We didn't even have a cat's-paw breeze. We had to row."

"He might have seen it was going to stop anyhow."

"Be ashamed, Dan. A stranger might have thought that, but you know the Master."

"True enough, Jim, and I *am* ashamed. What happened next?"

"The wind had set us out of our course, so we landed at the tombs of Gadara."

"But that's death!"

"For one man but not for a crew. Old man Zebedee did it. No man hunts trouble less, but no man takes less trouble to get out of its way. Perhaps he wanted to clear the beach. The two Devils of Gadara saw us and ran up, shouting. That waked the Master, and He went ashore. The rest stood aside but followed close, because the Devils strangle every man they catch and we might have to rescue Him. We didn't though. When they sensed who it was, they went down on their noses, instead, and began to beg. It was funny—and horrible. They begged not to be sent down into the lake or out into the desert. He asked their names and they answered, 'Legion,' because there were many of them, and they besought Him much. When they saw He meant to drive them out anyhow, they said they would go into the herd of swine. There were about two thousand pigs feeding on top of the bluff. We had seen them as we came in. The Master said, 'Get out of them!' and the two Devils of Gadara screamed and rolled and writhed horribly, then rose—sane.

"They did not understand what had happened at first; they were like men waked out of sleep. When they did learn what had happened, the way they thanked the Master was enough to break your heart. They were naked, so old man Zebedee dug them up some old clothes out of the lockers and we were just talking things over when it began to rain pigs."

"Began—to—what do you mean?"

"There had been a lot of shouting and squealing on top of the bluff, a little to one side. It suddenly got worse and then a pig came over, then ten pigs, then a hundred pigs. They didn't exactly fall—it was not quite up and down—they slid. Pigs and pigs and pigs! The bluff was solid black with pigs. When they hit the beach, they fell across it into the water and began to swim. For twenty minutes a solid column of pigs went out to sea.

"Then the swineherds came, furious. Our other boats landed, and they wanted us to take them and save the pigs. You see they did not know what had happened. Our men wouldn't go. Raising pigs in Palestine

is against the law, and the owners had bribed the Romans to support them in law-breaking and deserved to lose their herds. Then, pigs are unclean and we wouldn't touch them. Then, there was something special the matter with these particular pigs. When we told the swineherds, they agreed that the Devils had gone into the swine. They would have mobbed us, but more and more boats had come up and we were stalwart fishermen a hundred strong, and they did not dare. So they got to figuring the costs.

"They were glad to have the Devils of Gadara cured—very glad—but there were other crazy men in the district, and if it cost a thousand head of swine per cure, they couldn't afford it. We said it served them right. They oughtn't to raise pork anyhow. Hundreds had been cured across the lake without loss of a single cow or even sheep. More and more men ran up from Gadara, and it had the makings of a very pretty riot, when somebody had a flash of common sense.

"The Master had drawn to one side, talking quietly to one of the cured men. The

Gadara people saw that if they could get Him to go home, there would be no more madmen cured and no more pigs drowned. So they besought Him to depart from their coasts. It was no use to stay, and He saw it. One of the cured men wanted to come aboard, but the Master sent him instead to tell all the people in the pig-country about how he was cured. Then we came away and they have just landed and gone up into Capernaum and left me to take care of the boat."

"What became of the pigs?"

"Drowned and floating around in the lake."

"What became of Legion?"

"I hope never to learn."

Jairus' Daughter

THERE was a happy little maid of twelve, so impudently sweet that many loved her. She lived at Nahumstown on the Lake of Galilee. Her father was senior warden of the church there. As there was only one church and everybody belonged to it, this was a very important post indeed. One of his duties was to decide who should preach, and to entertain the famous orators and great rabbis who were invited.

Herod often came to Nahumstown and many eminent and learned men passed through on national business. The little maid had met and known half the great men of her nation before she was twelve. As is

often the case with children who meet many such men, she had the graciousness of a small but very gentle lady.

One of these great men was a carpenter from Branchtown, named Jesus Bar David. Jairus, the little maid's father, had asked Him once to preach, after He had spoken before the great assembled theologians at the capital. From that time the people asked for Him so often that He was almost their only preacher, for He cured many, many people.

The little maid was not afraid of Him. In fact, there was a secret between them. One day upon the housetop, after dinner, she had asked Him to tell her a story. Her mother was busy with the servants, and Jairus was called away to see a man, so she alone had heard that story. It was about an angel and a lamb, but it let through so much of Heaven's light, it had to be a secret. So she loved Him dearly.

After a time, her father stopped asking Him to dinner. He had gone away and come back followed by many grave, gray-bearded theologians from the Temple, great

men, well known. Jairus asked them, instead. Women were not allowed at table at such set formal banquets, and the Temple theologians talked with one another after dinner and not with her. So the only way a little maid could learn what they were saying was to act as a servant and help wait at table.

She found that they all said that her friend, her dear, dear friend, the carpenter, had turned away from God and was a servant of Satan.

"Nay, more," said Rabbi Bar Amni, "He is possessed by Satan. He casts out devils by power of the Prince of Devils, who dwelleth in Him."

The little maid cried out at this, in horror, and had to run from the room. She lay for hours, shaken and sobbing. And after that, she dared not wait at table.

He still preached in the Synagogue. The people looked for it, and the rabbis from Jerusalem themselves asked that He be invited, so that they might trap Him. Therefore she could see Him nearly every week, although she could not meet Him.

As the women filed in and out of the latticed women's gallery, she passed Him sometimes, standing in the doorway, and smiled and nodded to Him, and He smiled back. And often, while He was speaking, He looked up at the lattice-work, at the place where her small hand stretched through and her small face was pressed against the bars. But they never met any more.

As He stood sometimes on the platform and spoke and the sun from a side window poured upon Him—he always had the windows opened when He could and the old caretaker of the synagogue was a friend of His—she thought of angels. But she judged that she thought wrongly, for He seemed to her not lesser than the angels but their king.

At last, one day, she fell ill, very, very ill. He had been gone for weeks, on an excursion through the hill towns, preaching and healing. But it did not matter, because Jairus was His enemy now and would not have had Him in the house. The little maid had the burning fever. The doctors tied an

iron-handled knife to a thorn-bush, said a text from the Bible over it every day for three days and then cut down the bush, but she got no better. So they had Rabbi Bar Amni in—he had come back to town—and he prayed for her, but she grew worse. She had rolled her head from side to side for three days and called gently for "Jesus, Jesus, Jesus," but now she did not call at all.

Rabbi Bar Amni had come back to town because he was one of a committee sent to follow and oppose Jesus Bar David, and Jesus had come. But Jesus had gone away again, in the net-boat of Zebedee, the fisherman, and been caught in a storm on the lake, and Jairus did not know where He was.

The little maid lay so white and still that Jairus would have called Jesus, if he could have found Him. After all, what did it matter what the great rabbis from Jerusalem thought? Jairus sat up all night. So when the little maid's old nurse brought news that Jesus had come home again, Jairus went to find Him.

He found Him on the lake beach, in the middle of a crowd, seated and answering the

questions of some of John's disciples about fasting. Now Jesus was, by rights, Prince of the House of David and King of all that country. Jairus had never acknowledged it before. Now he knelt down, then fell on the ground before Him, in the old, old way in which a man who had done wrong asked mercy of a king. And then he told him about the little maid.

When Jesus heard that His little friend had need of Him, He rose at once and started to Jairus' house. Of course, when the crowd heard that Jairus, one of the town's great men, had acknowledged Jesus as king, they all ran together, and Jesus' friends had to go ahead to open a way.

A sick woman stopped Jesus and was cured. She too fell at His feet and treated Him as king. It made delay, and Jairus, standing by, knew that his little daughter's life ebbed fast. While the cured woman was yet talking, a group of people from Jairus' house pushed through the throng and one of them called to him:

"Your daughter is dead. Trouble not the Master any further."

Then Jesus said to Jairus:

"Do not be afraid. Only believe and she shall be made well."

When they came to Jairus' house, Jesus left the bulk of His disciples at the door, to hold back the crowd, and went in with Jairus, taking Peter and James and John. Jairus' wife, the child's mother, joined them within. The house was full of people, weeping real or imitation tears, and calling out praises of the dead child, for that was the custom.

Jesus said:

"Go away. Why do you make so much noise and cry so? The little maid is not dead, but sleeps."

They laughed at Him and sneered. They knew death when they saw it. Then He put them all out. Jairus, all this time, did and said nothing except what he was told. He was a childless man now. Nothing mattered.

Then the Master went to where the little maid lay and took her hand and said to her: "Little maid, wake up!" The Word of Power was a gentle call of love. She opened

her eyes, unstartled, unafraid, like any child called lovingly to wake on any morning.

He was not surprised, nor was she. The others trembled as she rose and smiled into the eyes of her dear, dear friend, and held His hand and walked a little, as He told her. That short walk ended in her mother's arms. But her mother wept in such happy, gasping thankfulness she had to be sent out of the room quickly, with directions to prepare and bring the child something to eat. There was a silent hand-clasp with the father as he, too, held his child in his arms, and then the Master turned and went away, by the stairway over the flat housetop, avoiding the surging crowd at the front door.

From that time on, the little maid could speak to her friend Jesus again.

The Two Meet

ONCE Jesus of Nazareth went alone on a preaching trip through Galilee. He came to a town called Nain, and there a young man named Simon met him. They liked each other, and Simon took Jesus home as his guest. Simon was the only son of his mother, who was a widow.

A year later, on another preaching trip, Jesus again came to Nain. At the edge of the town he met a funeral. He stood to one side and watched them carry the dead man past on a stretcher. It was his friend Simon, and in front walked Simon's mother the widow, weeping.

Then Jesus stopped the funeral. He took

Simon's hand and told him to get up. And Simon awakened from the dead and got up and took Jesus home with him to his mother's house to be his guest again.

The story of raising from the dead of the widow's son and Jairus' daughter rolled like two thunder-claps across the land. The whole country rang with them. Great Jerusalem and greater Sepphoris and all the other cities of the nation discussed them both on every street-corner, until their light was forgotten in the brightness of still greater things done by Jesus of Nazareth. But Simon, the widow's son of Nain, did not forget, nor did Jairus' little maid, and with a star-eyed wonder each thought about the other.

At last one day when Jesus of Nazareth had gone to be with God, Simon shut up his shop—he was a coppersmith—and went to his mother.

"Mother," he said, "we are poor."

"That is because you work so little, dear lad, since you came back, and sit so many hours dreaming."

"See this," said Simon.

It was a ring with a great diamond.

"If this were sold and spent frugally it would feed both of us for many years," said Simon's mother. "Whose is it?"

"Yours," said Simon. "The little lady of Capernaum sent it by one of Jesus' men with word it was for you and further word that she wished to see me."

"She means to keep you," said Simon's mother, and she began to cry. "Woe is me, else the jewel would not be so large."

"I would have gone to her two years ago," said Simon, "but her father is a very rich man. I have wished to see her more than you can ever understand, mother, to talk with her of when we were on the—the Other Side—and learn if she knows the same things I do."

"If she sees you she will keep you," said his mother, "for now she is fourteen and grown. Therefore she sent me this ring that I may sell it and live upon the money. I will not have it. You shall not go unless you take it back."

In Galilee in our Lord's time fourteen years was counted old enough to marry, for

girls in hot climates grow up much faster than in cold ones. Simon's mother was very loving and very muddle-headed and foolish. But Simon had been on the Other Side. The cold still clarity of Death had touched his eyes and left them seeing. So many people before his coppersmith's stall did things of which he saw the end from the beginning that he often sat hours lost in wonder that they did not see. That was why he wrought so little in the market-place.

He kissed his mother and comforted her, but made no promises. And he took the ring and sold it for a great sum, and gave the money to the banker before witnesses, arranging that he should give some of it to his mother every week. It was enough to last for many years. Then he took his staff in his hand and rolled his cloak over his shoulders and set out to walk to Capernaum.

Jairus was a very rich man, for he was ruler of the Synagogue. Capernaum was by the side of a lovely lake. When Simon asked where Jairus lived he was directed to a very grand house by the lake-side with trees and servants and impressive gateways.

Simon was well enough dressed for a coppersmith, but not nearly well enough for a visitor at that house. So the servants tried to stop him or send him round to the servants' entrance. Then he looked them between the eyes, and the cold, quiet clearness of death was on him, as strange as ice in August.

"He looks like the young mistress," said the doorkeeper to the steward and stood aside, and Simon walked in.

They called a maid and sent her for Jairus' daughter. When she told her mistress that a quiet young man with cold eyes wished to see her Jairus' daughter looked at her with eyes like pools of blue ice. She was sitting on the flat housetop at the time, where she could see the lake, and she gave quiet orders for the maid to bring the widow's son up and leave them alone.

He stood where Jesus had once sat, and looked long at her and the coldness in their eyes thawed because both of them were wise with a wisdom which is not of this world, and because both of them could see the end of most things from the beginning.

"Did you want to come back, Jairus' daughter?" said he.

"Yes, for my parents' sakes. Did you want to come back, widow's son?" she asked.

"Yes, for my mother's sake."

"I had only a few minutes over there," she said, "but it has changed the whole wide world for me."

"I had more than a day over there," said he, "and Lazarus had three days. I have asked him. But no one can understand what we saw, except each other."

"I can," said the little maid. "Tell me."

Now what he told her, I know. But I will not tell you because you could not understand. And what she told him I know, but you would not understand. But, as they told each other, the ice in their eyes melted, and when they spoke of the dear Master, who had called them back and who had now gone over there Himself, they both wept.

Then Simon, the widow's son, made as if to go, for he was poor, and though his eyes had melted he could still see the end of this thing from the beginning. But Jairus'

daughter could see it as well as he could. So she sent for her father and mother.

Jairus was a rich man, and he had once been a very foolish man. Now he was wise, for he had called Jesus "Lord" and that changes any man. There had once been a time when he would have made his servants show Simon, the young coppersmith, the door, because he saw how his daughter looked at him. Now he had learned the value of things that can not be bought with money.

His wife had once been a proud woman and an ambitious woman, wanting her daughter to marry a nobleman. Since then she had sat by her dead and then looked into the eyes of Jesus of Nazareth. So, when the little maid looked at them with eyes that were no longer cold she sighed and gave up all her worldly plans, for she had learned her lesson.

After Jairus and his wife had sighed and smiled and asked the widow's son to be their guest, they went away again and left their little maid alone with him on the housetop. And in that day and country that was al-

most as strange as death. Yet they did it gladly, because the coldness in her eyes had melted.

So Simon and the little maid talked long together of the other country and of how it would change everything in this world if everybody could see what they had seen and so know the end of most things from the beginning.

After they parted Jairus talked to Simon. Now, as I have said, from a foolish man Jairus had grown to be a wise one, but Simon was wiser. Then the little maid's mother talked to him. From a foolish woman she had grown to be kind and good; but Simon was kinder and better.

Jairus called the servants in and told them that Simon was his guest and, next after himself, the master of his house. Simon looked at them with eyes that were sometimes cold as little pools of ice and sometimes as kind as little bits of heaven, and full of understanding always. Then the doorkeepers gave up their insolence at the door and the maids gave up quarreling in the kitchen and one of the scullions, who

was a thief, ran away; for now everybody saw the end of this thing from the beginning.

So Jairus made a great feast, and Simon and the little maid were married. Simon gave the little maid a letter and a piece of money and a kiss. What was in the letter she never told anybody not even her mother, but she put it in a case with the piece of money and wore it round her neck always. She gave him back the kiss. Then the little maid was led to Simon's house—for Jairus was rich enough to give Simon a house to live in—and a rabbi gave her to Simon with a blessing and they signed a marriage-contract and drank a cup of consecrated wine together. And that made them married.

They lived together very quietly. Simon showed Jairus how to take some of his money and make a great deal more with it, quite honestly. Simon's mother married—as Simon had foreseen she would do when he left her. John Lightning, one of Jesus' disciples, came through there and made them all Christians, baptizing them, as Simon had

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foreseen that he would when he sent for him—for he did send for him.

Simon and Jairus' daughter never had any children, so they adopted half a dozen. Then Simon's mother died, and Jairus and his wife died, and all the children that the little maid had adopted grew up and married and moved away. So Simon and Jairus' daughter were left alone together, as both had foreseen they would be from the beginning.

They lived to be old. Their natural force abated but they lived on. The little maid grew to be a grand white-haired old lady as beautiful as an apple blossom in autumn, and Simon grew to be a tall strong old man with a great white beard like Elijah. All the Christians of Capernaum came to them and trusted them and loved them. One day she said,

"Simon."

"Yes, dear."

"It is borne in on me that I shall see Jesus to-morrow."

"He woke us up when we came back here. Therefore, since He is very kind, He ought to wake us up when we go there."

That night while she slept Simon watched. Perhaps he fell asleep and dreamed. He dreamed Jesus of Nazareth came into the room, not with white hair and flesh like light as John saw Him, but looking as He did in the old days in Galilee. He took her hand and smiled.

"Take me, too, Lord," said Simon.

"Strengthen the brethren for a little while yet, Simon," He said.

Then He turned to the old lady who had once been the little maid and said, "*Talitha cumi*—little girl, wake up." And she arose and went with Him. And she is with Him now.

The Troubles of Philip

TOLD BY THE CABIN BOY OF CAPTAIN SIMON'S BOAT

"HULLO, Dan. Come aboard, I've got another story for you."

"That's good, for I've got one for you."

"Mine's the best. They've been trying to make the Master king."

"Yes. I've heard about the bread that grew. Mine is funny though."

"What was it?"

"Well, you know that when you landed the Master at Bethsaida this morning He started up the beach road to Capernaum. He had already cured all the Bethsaida

people who could walk to Him, but there were some in the village who were bed-ridden and could not go. So they brought them out on cots and mattresses and laid them in the street. When He cured one, of course He had to attend to all the others too. It took Him so long that it came time for breakfast before he reached Capernaum. Each of the Twelve had a basket-work haversack of bread slung at his belt——"

"Yes, Dan, my bread. I'll tell you how they filled those haversacks——"

"And they took some out and began to eat it. The Scribes and Pharisees from Jerusalem had not been with the Master for a day or two——"

"They are too fat and dignified to ford Jordan and too mean to hire boats——"

"And they heard where the Master was and came out from Capernaum and got there just when the Twelve began eating. I came along. The first man they found was Philip, sitting in a doorway, dividing his bread with little Miriam Bathjohn, the baby. He had not washed his hands because there was no place for this purpose.

Besides, they were clean as could be, for he had been working in the water about the boat. They saw him and you should have heard them blow up. They said no end of things. Said it was the Master's fault letting Philip do it, and that washing hands and cups and platters and tables before eating was one of the most sacred principles of our religion, and neglecting it made us all heretics.

"Then the Master turned on them. He called the crowd around Him and began. He never said a disrespectful or irreligious word. But—well, you heard Captain Simon Peter, the boss, before he ever met the Master, tell what he thought of Captain Daniel Bar Canas when he ran his boat through our net off the point there and let half a ton of fish get away. I tell you, the Master never said a wrong word, but it was worse than that. I shook in my sandals, though I had nothing to do with it, just because I had seen it.

"It was like a poem, a great song. He quoted the Bible at them and proved by it that they were wrong. One thing I remem-

ber was that He told how wicked it is for a man to cast off his father and mother, the way they allow, by saying 'Corban' to them. Call *Him* meek? I tell you He's the worst man to stir up that ever sailed on Galilee. The Jerusalem committee went off, inland, down a lane, and held a council, and Philip came up to the Master and thanked Him, and the Master put His hand on Philip's shoulder.

"Now what's your story? I have heard already that He fed five thousand with bread and fish and that they tried to make Him king, and that He put them off and went into the hills to pray."

"That's not half of it. When we took boat from here the crowd followed along the beach and forded Jordan, and when we landed at the north lagoon some of the young men were already there. The Master taught them, of course. And as the crowd came up, bringing their sick with them, He cured the sick. Then He stood on the rise of the hill and taught them again, made a great speech of it. He told Captain Simon that He was sorry for the

common people, since they are without a leader, now that John Baptist has been killed by Herod."

"Herod! May his grave be defiled. May——"

"Hush. The Master says not to curse. It nearly killed Captain Simon to quit, but he's done it. The Twelve have been handling crowds for three months, now, and know how it ought to be done, and the Master talked too long, till there was just barely time for the people to get back to Bethsaida Julias by dark.

"At last the Twelve interrupted and asked Him to let the people go while there was still time to get something to eat and a place to sleep before black dark. They shouldn't have done it. I know that much myself. Captain Simon taught me long ago, with a rope's end, that the captain can sail his own boat without advice from the crew. Dan, it did me good to the marrow of my bones to see the Master teach the whole Twelve the same lesson. 'Feed them yourselves,' He says, and goes right on with his speech. It was such a magnificent speech that not one of

the five thousand noticed how late it was getting. But, of course, we did, because we had heard him say the same things before, in different words.

"You should have seen the Twelve. They called Judas and got off to one side, behind the crowd, and counted the money in the bag and in their purses and then went and told the Master they had *two hundred denarii*, but it wasn't enough, and what should they do? He said, 'What lunch have you?' and told the crowd to wait, closed His speech and began to talk to Philip, while Andrew Jonasson—he's the mate of our boat, you know—found me and sent me to run and overhaul the bread-locker. Captain Simon's wife puts something in it every time we start, and James' brother Jude, the one the Master calls the Hearty, gets it out. There were five loaves of bread and two salt fishes, and I ran back with them as fast as I could.

"The Master was talking to Philip, and poor Philip was having a miserable time. The Eleven were miserable, too; for the Master was asking Philip which were the

best bake-shops in Bethsaida Julias. Philip lived there, you know, before he joined the Twelve.

"I reported to Andrew, who told the Master. He made the crowd sit down in groups. They looked like flower-beds on the green grass. Then He took the bread and said grace, the usual grace He always says. Then He broke it and the fish and gave to the Twelve to give to the people.

"Dan, it grew! I could not see just when it grew, and neither could Captain Simon, though he carried it by armfuls, for I heard him say so. But a man would take an armful, enough to feed fifteen or twenty, and give great helpings of bread and fish to a couple of hundred before it gave out. When he came back to the Master for more, there was plenty more waiting.

"They were all so busy and the people were so eager that nobody realized what was going on except the Master and me. I did because I was close to Him and had nothing to do and time to watch. Once I started to shout, but He smiled and shook His head, so I kept quiet. Then He told

Andrew to give me some, and I ate with the others. It was just ordinary barley-bread and fish, nothing different from usual.

"At last, when everybody had eaten enough, and the Twelve too, He told them to fill their basket-work haversacks with the unused bread that was left over. While they were doing it somebody asked where the food came from, and then, all of a sudden, everybody seemed to find out what had happened.

"Dan, it struck them dumb. Everybody stopped talking, and there was a great silence. Then some one shouted, 'This is that Prophet Moses wrote of!' And Philip said, 'The man who can feed an army like this can free us from the Romans!' Then everybody began shouting 'Make him king! Make him king!' The Twelve shouted louder than any.

"Dan, the Master turned on us, and, when I saw His face, I stopped shouting. The Twelve are under His orders. Anybody who follows a rabbi is under the rabbi's orders. Every one knows that, of course; but I had forgotten it, because He

has never issued any orders and has always said, 'Please,' and 'Thank you,' and 'I would like to do this.' Most likely the Twelve had forgotten it too. They remembered it now. His voice was different. It stung. 'Get aboard!' He says, short and sharp and then again, 'Pull to Bethsaida!' It was like the centurion at Capernaum, drilling men, only crisper.

"The crowd had started to surge forward, but He held them still—He lifted His hand and they stopped—and the Twelve and old man Zebedee and I and the others that had come in the boat sorted ourselves out from the great press of people and marched down to the beach and got in and shoved off. We never thought about it at all. We just did it. Then the Master motioned to the crowd not to follow, and turned and walked off into the hills. He made a white dot in the dusk until He went over a crest and was gone.

"We had not pulled a stone's throw offshore when it began to blow. Not in a short squall, over in an hour, as it usually does on the lake, but a long steady roarer from the

west that came out of a clear sky right over the hilltops back of Bethsaida of Galilee. I never saw so steady a wind in all my life on the lake. Neither did old Man Zebedee in all his. We could have run into Jordanmouth for shelter, and usually we would. But this time the Master had laid His orders on the Twelve—His orders, mind you, for the first time—to pull to Bethsaida, and Captain Simon told us all that to Bethsaida we were going, if we had to pull out the rowlocks.

"With one man at each oar we could do nothing, so we double-banked the oars, two men to each, and pulled and pulled and pulled. There were no clouds, and we could tell the time by the moon. It is five miles across the lake there, and with calm weather we could make it with double-banked oars in less than an hour. The moon was low in the east behind us when we started. Dan, that moon overtook us and beat us and passed above us and balanced, big and round and bright as day, over the hills behind Gennesaret before we got beyond the middle of the lake. Oh, but

we were tired and stubborn and mad. It had taken us nine hours to pull only three miles.

"There was a heavy sea running, of course, with spray and white-caps, but there was no mist, and the sky was clear. We had all grown stupid and sullen and stubborn, we were so tired, but nobody said anything about stopping. The Master had seen the storm coming, and, seeing it, had sent us out against it. If he wanted us at Bethsaida, to Bethsaida we would go. The moon was settling over the south end of the town, where it reaches out into the plain of Gennesaret, and all the water in front of us, except the moon-glade, was black as ink, for the lee side of the waves was in shadow; while all the water behind us was blazing silver, for the weather side of each wave was in full moonlight. We were pretty nearly standing still, for all we could pull just kept us from drifting backward. At last some one noticed a white speck a mile off, in the middle of the moon-dazzle to leeward. We roused up at that and watched it and wondered what it was. It came

nearer slowly, and at last Philip said, 'It looks like a man.'

"He had better have kept quiet. After they had all growled at him, because, of course, no man could be there, old man Zebedee said, 'The Master wore white.' If he said, 'Wears white,' I would not have noticed, but, as it was, I understood. We are His body-guard, and He had sent us away and stayed alone in the middle of a mob of five thousand men who were desperate, because they were trying to start a revolution.

"No man can walk on water. So old man Zebedee made sure the Master had been killed, and this was His spirit. The cold chills went up and down my back, for we could not get away. We had plenty of time to be frightened, too, for the Thing came on quietly, a little slower than a man would walk on land, for the wind held it back. It was at least twenty minutes, and seemed like twenty hours, before it came near enough to be hailed. Long before that, of course, we had seen that there was no mistake. It was certainly the Master. It was dressed like Him, looked like Him,

walked like Him. Of course, it never crossed our minds that it *was* Him for no man can walk on water.

"We had plenty of time to talk it over while He was coming, and plenty of time to feel how wretched we were now He was dead. Dan, I did not know how much I loved Him until then. It did not seem worth while to stay alive, with Him gone.

"At last the Thing got close enough to be hailed. By that time I was over my first fright. I am afraid of ghosts, but I am not afraid of the Master. He has been my best friend, and I had rather see His ghost than not see Him at all. He would not hurt me unless it were to help me very much, and besides—well, I just found that I wanted to be near even His ghost."

"I understand. Go on."

"Captain Simon must have felt the same way, for when he hailed, 'Who's there?' his voice shook and yet was friendly. The Master answered:

" 'Do not be afraid. It is I.'

"Dan, it was Him: He Himself, not His ghost. The moment I heard His voice I

knew it, and so did the rest of us. There was no mistake. It was like hearing your father's voice when you were a little chap, scared and in the dark. Captain Simon said:

" 'If it is really you, tell me to come to you on the water.'

" 'Come!'

"Of course, if the Master were not dead, He was walking on the water. And if one man can do that another can. Captain Simon passed me the steering oar and jumped overboard, and landed with both feet on a wave. And, Dan, he stood there. His feet did not make holes in the water. He stood on the waves and staggered, as I have heard that men stagger on the ground when it is moving in an earthquake, and he did not sink any more than such men do. I let go of the oar with one hand, and rubbed my eyes, but there was no doubt. He stood there, and the wind carried him away to leeward.

"Pretty soon he got his balance and tried to walk, but the wind would not let him. We had stopped rowing, of course, and

were drifting fast to leeward, but he drifted a great deal faster, and it looked as if he would be carried past the Master. He saw it himself and it frightened him—you could tell by the way he held himself and tried to walk—and as soon as he began to be afraid he began to sink. He sank to his ankles, and then he sank to his knees. He shouted something I did not hear; and the Master walked to him and just as he sank to his waist, took his hand and held him up and kept him from drifting any farther.

"Then the boat drifted down on them and we took them in. It was the Master, sure enough, just as quiet and solid as usual. I reached out and felt His arm, to see, and He turned and smiled at me. As for Captain Simon, he was wet to the waist, and all a-tremble and excited.

" 'I did it!' he said. 'I did it! Did you see? I walked on the water! I did it!'

"The moon set just then, and when it came dark the wind stopped as if cut off with a knife and it was a dead calm. We were pulling again, of course, with double-banked oars as usual, and nobody had any-

thing to say. You see, nobody could doubt what we had just seen, and yet nobody could believe it. At last old man Zebedee, who was up in the bows, came aft and knelt down in front of the Master, where He sat in the stern-sheets on the helmsman's leather cushion, and said:

" 'I said that no man could walk on water.'

" 'Simon did.'

" 'By Thy power. Master, Thou art no man. Thou art the Son of God.'

"The Twelve heard, but they went right on pulling. They did not believe what they had seen. I knelt down by old man Zebedee and the Master put His hands on our shoulders. And then Philip, who was pulling inboard on the port after oar, said:

" 'Look! Day dawns in the east.'

"Captain Simon, at the steering oar, looked round. Then he looked back and jumped. 'Way enough,' he said. 'Cease pulling.' And, in a minute, he ran her stem up on the gravel beach of the plain of Gennesaret, just beyond the last house of the Bethsaida suburb of Capernaum.

"Sure enough, it was gray dawn, so early that no one was around. They made things ship-shape and everybody went ashore but me: it is my job to stay and take care of the boat. The Master was in the stern-sheets, and He never hurries, so He landed last. Nobody had said anything: but when He came ashore the Twelve all knelt down on the pebbles around him, and Captain Simon said, 'Rabbi, I believe at last. Thou art the Son of God.'

"Then they rose and walked together into Bethsaida. And, when I turned around, dawn was strong in the east."

The Blind Man

WHEN our Lord sent out the twelve Apostles two and two, Judas Iscariot was paired presumably with Thomas. The two healed right and left, for all the pairs did that. Yet Judas, as he proved later, never really grasped what it was all about. The mind of Christendom has lingered over this with a wistful sorrow and amusement. One would like to know how Judas felt, and why.

They went from village to village across Galilee and left a blazing trail of cures behind them, like a rocket, for so did all. They preached repentance, for the Kingdom of Heaven was at hand. The towns

turned out and the villages crowded to hear them, partly for the cures but principally to hear what they had to say, for we may be sure that Judas' preaching dealt with war and triumph and a great world empire, with the Romans underfoot and Jews at the head of everything. He should have been and probably was, the most popular orator of the Twelve, and said very little about repentance. But hollow as the preaching may have been, the cures were genuine.

Therefore we can imagine the two leaving one village well escorted and moving on to another, weary but triumphant. There comes the tap, tap, tap of a stick behind them, and a lifted voice cries:

"Wait, sirs, wait. Halt, Prophets of Israel. Be patient, Princes. Stop, great Lords. Oh, fishermen, in pity wait."

Judas shrugs his shoulders wearily, but halts perforce, for Thomas stops and a well-dressed blind old man, led by a servant and wearing an eyeshade, hurries up the path after them.

"I heard of you and hastened from my

farm. If you can cure me half of it is yours."

"See you at all?"

"Not for these many years. Abraham lived an hour in horror of great darkness, I half a lifetime. The eyeshade is because blind eyes are ugly. Besides, although I can not see, the full sun in my eyes gives pain. My name is Daniel Bar Joseph—a slave of darkness."

"Daniel Bar Joseph, Son of Light, come hither. Know this, and ye around who follow us know also; the power by which we heal is not our power, but Jesus', Son of David."

The little group who had gathered nodded in satisfaction. They had taken Judas' measure if not Thomas', and preferred to trust in Jesus Son of David rather than in either. Thomas looked around for one of the men whom they had cured of blindness at the last village and, finding one, motioned him forward and told him to speak. He was still too shaken with surprise to do more than testify, "I see, I see, I see," but that was enough to carry out

Thomas' purpose and increase the faith of the new patient.

Then Thomas asked for oil, which was not so absurd a request as it sounds, for people ate oil on bread then as we now eat butter, and a good many travelers carried a little jar of it in their basket-work haversacks. Thomas poured into his palm a few drops from one of half a dozen proffered jars, and ordered the servant to help the blind man kneel down, while Judas laid his hands upon his head. Then Thomas said:

"Now pray, Bar Joseph, pray very greatly. Pray, all of you. O Lord God of Israel, Father of Lights, be merciful to this thy servant who lives in the shadow of great darkness. Now, Daniel Bar Joseph, in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, look up and see!"

Thomas, while speaking, had removed the eyeshade and anointed the blind eye with oil. The gray-haired old man clapped hand to eyes, rose from his knees, staggered, then began to weep in deep gasping sobs that ripped and tore him. The by-standers,

puzzled, looked at one another, and Judas asked:

"Daniel Bar Joseph, why weep? Why not rejoice?"

"Who are you, man of God, that you can

cure blindness and yet not understand it? The citadel of life itself is shaken by so great seeing."

"I know, I know, even if Judas does not. Now fare ye well, Bar Joseph."

"Wait, sirs, your fee!"

"Not so. God's sunlight is a free gift," said Thomas.

"Not so fast, Thomas. Our purse is empty. 'Tis inconvenient, very, to lack money. Note that I kept my promise and asked nothing. This man offered it."

"Yes, Princes. Let there be payment," urged Bar Joseph.

"All a man has is not enough for eyesight," answered Thomas. "Would you keep what you have, Bar Joseph, and be blind again?"

"Put my poor body up at auction for a slave, but leave me seeing."

"'Tis not enough. You have more. What of your soul."

"That, sirs, is not mine own but God's. Ere you touch that, take back your gift of sight."

"Praise God there is still a man left in Israel. Your fee, Bar Joseph, is all you own and all you are, mind, body and soul, given to Him who cured you through Jesus Christ; not to us His humble agents, but to God your Father who has given you power to see. Folk around you are hungry —make them see food; sick—make them see nursings; cold—make them see clothes;

strangers—make them see friends—orphans —make them see a Father's care. So shall you pay fee where you owe it—to Him who cured you. As for us, touch coin of yours we dare not."

"Princes, how great and kind and glorious is God."

The group dissolved, and Thomas strode and Judas discontentedly plodded on to the next village. Judas was not the only one who misunderstood the spirit of Our Lord's teaching. But Judas was the only one who permanently stuck to his misunderstanding. After a mile in silence Thomas remarked:

"Judas, in suddenly seeing the kindness of God, that blind man learned the secret of the Kingdom."

And Judas closed the incident by quite truthfully answering:

"I do not understand you, Thomas."

The Dying Woman

When the news that Herod had killed John Baptist came like a thunder-clap through the land the Twelve Apostles returned to Jesus. He had sent them out in six groups, two by two, and by this time they had performed many kinds of cures throughout the country.

Our Lord had journeyed through Galilee before. The Twelve naturally inquired for people He had cured and went to them for rest and lodging. The poor being more numerous than the rich most of the cured were poor, and therefore the six pairs of Apostles spent much of their time in such houses.

The original "dobe" hut was probably built in Palestine. At least, in our Lord's time, most of the poorer houses there were adobe—built of mud. They were cool in summer, warm in winter and easily repaired at all times. The only things that cost money about them were the timbers for the roof and they were usually made of saplings and not expensive. Their roofs and floors were beaten clay, their ground-plan and elevation were those of a great oblong dry-goods box and their furniture consisted of a clay platform, across one end, six feet wide and eighteen inches high, which served as a bed by night and a seat and lounge by day.

To complete the picture, however, one must remember the exceedingly dense population of Galilee and the dress of the people. Really considerable cities were often in sight of each other. Villages of five or six thousand souls were strung out every mile or two along each highway, often merging. The apostles did not have far to go in any direction to find people.

Clothes varied even less than homes. Over a trifle of underclothing everybody ex-

cept rabbis, who had a special dress of their own, wore a "chiton"—what we would call a nightshirt—and over that a garment that looked like a dressing-gown, reaching a little below the knees and held together by a broad sash, though the sash was usually twisted together like a rope. Over this women often wore a shawl with one corner drawn over the head, and men on a journey wore a long heavy gray cloak, usually rolled up like a soldier's blanket-roll and carried yoke-fashion over the shoulders. The dressing-gown was usually made of up-and-down strips of black and brown cloth about two feet wide, sewed together alternately. Everybody wore sandals.

In the edge of Tabor in Galilee one late afternoon, two men dressed in those clothes knocked at the door of an adobe house, to which they had found their way by inquiring where lived the nearest man who had been healed by Jesus of Nazareth the year before. There was delay and a stir inside, and the man who opened had tears upon his cheeks, after the frank Oriental fashion. They asked:

"Are you Jonas Bar Amni, the man whom Jesus of Nazareth cured of deafness?"

"I am. Lower your voices and be brief, I pray. What do you want?"

"Lodging and entertainment, as messengers from Him. To-morrow we plan to preach and heal in this village."

"Sir, I would not seem inhospitable or ungrateful. He cured me, and He and His at any other time are more than welcome. But this unhappy house can not have guests. Miriam, my wife, is dying."

"Pardon. We did not know."

"Of course, of course. And, now, your pardon if I leave you."

The two men looked at each other, and the younger, a city man, nodded. The elder, soldierly of bearing and a trifle reckless, placed his foot in the doorway, then swept the householder aside, not by touching him but by the authority of his sudden gesture, and the two entered. They found themselves in a one-room adobe house with a barred window. On the divan, in a huddle of rugs and blankets, lay a middle-aged woman, unconscious, while four other

women stood looking down at her. The elder man waved these, too, aside and studied the sick woman for some minutes, then said:

"Jonas Bar Amni, have you faith in Jesus of Nazareth?"

"If He were here, sirs, Miriam need not die."

"He gives us power. Miriam! Miriam! In the name of Jesus of Nazareth rise up and walk."

The woman stirred, murmured something and tried to sit up. Her eyes opened, but there was no light in them. Then they closed, and she sank back.

"She is too far gone, sirs. You can not reach her."

"No, but God can, easily. The more the outward man decayeth the easier to reach the free spirit. Have faith and pray, Bar Amni. Matthew, you try."

The younger man bent over the sick woman, laid a hand on her shoulder and said:

"Miriam, we are Simon and Matthew, Jesus of Nazareth's men, sent to cure you. The peace of God, which passeth under-

standing, heal you through Jesus Christ our Lord."

At the mention of peace a change came over the woman's face. Her breathing slowed and strengthened, her frame relaxed and her eyes opened again, then closed drowsily. Matthew knelt and prayed in silence, and Simon asked if there were any oil in the house. Bar Amni brought a jarful and Simon took a little in his palm and prayed aloud:

"O God, our Heavenly Father. Jesus told us to pray to Thee, lay hands upon the sick, anoint them with oil and they shall recover. Rebuke, we pray Thee, this unknown illness which is upon Miriam, Thy servant, and cast it out of her. Amen."

He dipped his finger in the oil and marked it upon her forehead and upon the palms of her hands, then nodded to Matthew, while both recited the old, old rabbinical benediction, descended from the patriarchs, which every Hebrew knew by heart as we know the Lord's Prayer:

"The Lord bless thee and keep thee. The Lord make His face to shine upon thee and

be gracious unto thee. The Lord lift up His countenance upon thee and give thee health and peace, both now and evermore." And added, "In the Name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen."

The women around the divan gasped, for Miriam opened her eyes and smiled up at the strangers. Then she said:

"Jonas?"

"What is it, Miriam?"

"I dreamed that I was ill. Who are these good men?"

"Servants of Jesus of Nazareth."

"What! Jesus' men come here and I be dreaming? Your pardon, Masters. Martha, Maria, Susan, Elizabeth, how came you here?"

"We came to help you."

"Good neighbors, good neighbors all. I see that there is fire in the charcoal-furnace. We have oil and dry fish, wine and grapes and apples and bread and honey. Supper shall soon be ready."

"Nay. Let the neighbors do it. You have been ill, Miriam. Rest, therefore"

"And these men cured me?"

"Madame, we had that grace."

"You made a good job of it. Jonas, dear and stupid, I need no rest. I never felt better in my life. Lead your guests out and in a little while, supper is ready."

"Have you no thanks to God?"

"Martha, I laugh to keep from crying. My whole life shall be one long thanks to God—and Jesus son of David—and these —and you. Now you men get you gone, but go not far. Come soon to supper."

Next day the little town of Tabor listened to the preaching of Simon and Matthew. They said, "Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." Bar Amni stood by their side while his wife Miriam and her friends hurried from house to house and turned everybody out to hear them.

The preaching would have been eloquent if it had not been interrupted. Miriam brought children, sick children, in her arms, and had them cured in a happy storm of tears and thankfulness. Seeing this, others brought them also, and as their faith rose, older patients began to come. Then

they brought out the chronic cases, the lame, the halt, the blind. Then came the only two lepers in the neighborhood. And at last, all doubt being gone, the able-bodied men of the town organized themselves into squads and swept in all the feeble-minded and insane kenneled in cliffs and dens in the rocks for some miles around. Patients from other towns began to come in; until Simon and Matthew, worn out, had to end the party by inquiring for some one Jesus of Nazareth had cured elsewhere and moving on to the next village.

It was seven such trails as this, criss-crossing all Galilee—for Jesus Himself was not idle—which made the people wish to make Him king. And it was this work which was brought to an end when news ran through the land that Herod had killed John Baptist.

The Robber

NEVER is earth more beautiful than in irrigated country by moonlight. The full moon turns the world to ebony and silver. The irrigation brooks make murmuring music and freshen all the air, the cool breeze whispers through the roses, figs and pomegranates, and in every grove a nightingale sings out its little heart. In the bottom of that great chasm south of the Lake of Galilee where Jordan—Rapid River—plunges between mile-high mountains to the Dead Sea, the land, now a desert, was then more beautiful than elsewhere. But John and James perceived the beauty dimly. They were weary, for they had healed many.

"The need is laid on me to pray, John Lightning," said James. "I feel that power has gone out of me. Our last few cures came slowly."

The Twelve had learned, by much watching of the Master, that prayer was His great resource and refreshment, the reservoir from which He drew His spiritual power. Timidly, bit by bit, they had copied Him, until now they, too, found strength in it. It had been but matter of experiment, however, until he sent them out in pairs to heal others. Then the work of healing the world's misery had sapped their strength and prayer had suddenly become an every-day necessity.

John, however, did not pray now, for he was fasting and too tired. He used to wonder why Jesus ate no supper after a weary day of cures, but now the whole Twelve had learned that you can not speak well nor cure well nor even pray well except when fasting. So he sat down under a pomegranate bush while James went apart under a fig tree to pray.

The pomegranate stretched between the fig trees and a low wall, beyond which was

a highway, and James and John had come through the fig orchard from the home where they were guests. The shadows were inky dark. Outside the shadows the moon was bright as day.

Palestine policed her roads very badly. Rome held the cities in an iron order, but left the countryside to the feeble care of the Sanhedrin and the various native princes. The irrigated land was as rich and populous as any in the world, but the mountains ran through the country in such a way that it was nowhere more than a couple of hours' walk from the richest garden district to a connected wilderness of chasms and cliffs and rocks and caves and sparsely-peopled, whale-backed mountain-tops high above irrigation level. Therefore it was a land of bandits. Robbery flourished. A band of robbers could leave their stronghold after dusk, commit their crimes and be back in their hiding-place before daylight.

Of course, now and then, when a band grew intolerable, the householders complained against their princes, and the Romans took a hand, lowered cages of legion-

aries down the cliffsides, and wiped out the robbers. Still if a band were not *too* cruel and did not break into houses this rarely happened.

Suddenly John heard a faint stir and caught a wink of moonlit steel among the pomegranates. In that day and time no armed band watched frequented roads except for bloody reason. John dared not move, for he and James had stood openly in the moonlight and talked without restraint. The robbers must have seen them. The murmur of James' voice in prayer ceased just then, so John called him. No man who served Jesus of Nazareth, with all the wickedness in high places against him, held life too strongly. James came and John told what he had seen.

"Steel is a clean death," said James, and walked toward the road.

"Give you good night, ye armed men at the hedge, and also you who stood and now walks behind us. Are any sick among you? We are Jesus of Nazareth's men, sent to seek sickness everywhere and cure it where we find it."

"Slay them for meddlers," said a robber, stepping into the moonlight.

"Not so," interposed another. "Bar Nimshi, here, one of our boldest, has fever still upon him. Can you cure it?"

"If he believe we can. According to a man's faith is it done unto him. What say you, Jehu, son of Nimshi?"

"Why, these be wizards. How knew you my name?"

"Because 'tis not your own but a nickname, given for reckless chariot-driving. I see that we can cure you. Kneel down."

One of the men came forward, removed his helmet and knelt down, and John and James both laid their hands upon his head. Then John prayed:

"Father of all men, God: I am drawn to this poor wandering son of Thine who calls himself Jehu, son of Nimshi. Give him to us that he may be saved for Thee. In the Name of Jesus of Nazareth cast out this fever. Rise, Jehu, and be well. Follow thou me."

"Stop that! You may be Jesus of Nazareth's men and cure sickness, but we are

Barabbas' men and must report to him."

"Hush, Captain—or, rather, report this Jehu lost because of a burning fever. How is it, Jehu?"

"Your hands are cool. The coolness still abides. My body burns no longer. I am well."

"Captain, if we let them go they will warn off the merchants whom we wait for. If we let them live they will recognize and betray us."

"Recognize you, yes. Betray you, no. We know nothing to betray. It is no crime for armed men to rest by moonlight in an orchard. If merchants come perhaps we ought to warn them, but, Captain, that raised voice of yours has done so already. You had best away lest they tell Herod's patrol that men lurk in this orchard."

"Slay them, Captain. Some one came part way down the road just now and ran back. Stand aside, Jehu," called a robber.

"Stand you aside. I can not let you kill the men who cured me," said Jehu, replacing his helmet and drawing his sword.

A growling stir among the men made it plain that Jehu was popular. So, after a moment's meditation, the captain answered:

"He who draws sword against a brother of the band must leave it, but his oath of silence holds."

"So be it," replied Jehu, and saluted and sheathed his sword. The captain and most of the men returned the salute. The band clustered a moment, then fled over the wall like a group of disconcerted boys and vanished up a lane that led toward the mountains, and John spoke—to God.

"Father of all, we thank Thee that Thou hast given us this lad who shall no longer be a man of blood, but come with us and learn to be one of Christ's men."

And James and he who had been Jehu, son of Nimshi, softly replied, "Amen."

The Bent Old Woman

ONCE upon a time there lived in a town in the irrigated country a little bent old woman called Martha Bathsaul. This Martha Bathsaul had long been in ill health. Eighteen years before she had bent double with an attack of rheumatism; and when the rheumatism left her it hurt so much to stand upright that now she never tried.

The irrigated country stretched in a long strip from the fresh lake to the salt one. It was a treeless country except for the orchards, a place of soap-bubble colors, with every inch of flat land and all the lower slopes of the hills terraced and watered and all the hill-shoulders and table-land in dry-

farming wheat or in sheep pasture. Grass is never so green as in irrigated country, nor fruit trees so luxuriantly beautiful, nor population so dense. It was a land drowned in sunshine, filled with color, flooded with light, fenced with the rainbow glories of great treeless mountains and teeming with people.

Five acres in figs, ten in olives or seven in vines would amply support a family. The whole region was made of just such garden patches, each with its old vine-clad stone walls and its little flat-roofed, vine-covered stone house, where the owner sat on the roof in the cool of the day and could talk, by raising his voice a trifle, with the neighbors on the next farm. It was an old, old country, teeming with tradition but swarming with young life. The orchards were vocal with birds, the roads with children. Every mile or two was a village, every ten miles a city. Every village and every city had its schools. The people agreed in politics and they were almost all of one religion. Yet there was a shadow over the land.

Some thought that the shadow was because they were a protected state on the borders of a great empire. There was a European resident with a garrison of foreign soldiers in every city. Some thought it was disorder. There were bandits in the hills. Some thought it was disease. Irrigation without sanitation means a sickly land, and these people had no idea of sanitation or medicine. Some thought it was religion. The highest religious officials did not always believe in the God they served. What the mothers thought they did not say; but they drew their children closer and looked to see that there was no leper nor madman near, for the land had no hospitals and no insane asylums.

Whatever the cause of the shadow, it had lifted a little lately. The country had a rightful king. He was dethroned, indeed, and a mere private citizen. But he would have been their king if they had been free. What was more to the purpose He was a great preacher, and the common people hoped that He could set things straight, for the rulers at the capital were afraid of him.

Above all, as far as the horror was concerned, He was a doctor, the most skilful doctor the world has ever known, for He could cure madmen. He looked them in the eyes and said something or did something to them—no one quite knew what—and they went home sane.

All through the irrigated country He had out advance agents, thirty or forty pairs of them, making appointments for His visits to towns, and even these advance agents sometimes cured people.

Martha Bathsaul heard all these things, but the one thing important was that He would not cure her. You could not reach Him like an ordinary doctor, with a fee. He was much too grand a person to take money, and He was surrounded by university professors and doctors of divinity and of law from the capital, who traveled with Him and debated on His speeches. People said that He was kindly and simple and had grown up as a peasant; but even so she could never hope to reach Him, being so sick and poor.

On the Sabbath when He came to her

town He spoke in the meeting-house, and she sat in the gallery and saw and heard him. He was a tall man with a full brown beard and a pleasant face—such a pleasant face, strong and gentle and sad, yet lighting up, when He smiled, like sunshine. He talked about how good God is and about the good times coming. Then the meeting broke up, and He went down and stood in the entry and watched the people as they passed. He was not very far from the gallery stairs, and Martha Bathsaul had to come down slowly. Of course she went slower than necessary, so that she might look down at Him closely, with her soul in her eyes. He looked up, read her face and said:

"Madam, come here."

She came and stood before Him and the crowd formed a ring. Then he said: "Madam, you are loosed from your infirmity."

She did not understand. She was still bent over. The doctors and professors glanced triumphantly at one another, for the cure had failed. Then He laid his hand on her shoulder, and at the touch she

straightened. Then she remembered His sermon and how good God is, and there, before all the people, she began to sing "Praise God."

Some of the people joined in, so the senior warden of the congregation turned on them, for he agreed with the college professors that the law that the doctors should not practise on the Sabbath had been broken by this cure. The Teacher was so great and dignified a man that he dare not blame Him, and the little bent old woman could not be blamed because she had not asked to be cured. So he blamed the congregation, and said:

"There are six days in which men ought to work. Come and be healed in them and not on the Sabbath!"

Then the Teacher turned on him and His eyes blazed. For a moment He was still, and the tense silence of fear was on all, for He who can cure disease can inflict it.

"You hypocrite!" He said to the warden and paused. At last he went on, "You loose a cow or a horse on the Sabbath and lead it to water. Ought not this woman, then, a

daughter of our people whom Satan has bound eighteen years, to be loosed on the Sabbath?"

The people led away the woman, weeping for joy. And, now that she was straight, all could see that she was not so very little nor so very old after all. The Teacher watched them a minute, and then His face changed and saddened and He went out, up into the hills, to pray. They did not let Him stay there long, though, because so many sick people crept after Him and begged to be cured.

Susan and Miriam

"PLAY with us, Miriam."

"You know I can not, Susan."

"You must, or when the crowd comes these will scatter, and may be lost or hurt. Tell stories. Oh, children, run; Miriam will play school in the portico."

Susan was an imperious little beauty of twelve, daughter of Shaul the village head man, chief of the children, and full of sunny sins as innocent as virtues. But Miriam Bathsharan, her cousin, by force of thirteen years and something behind the quiet in her eyes, controlled them all in spite of her little crutch.

The market-place of the roadside village, paved with pebbles and clay and framed on

three sides with flat-roofed adobe houses, clung above irrigation level to the tremendous rocky side of a Perean hill and commanded a view to take your breath away. Below was Jordan Valley, waving with wheat, with straight lines of fruit-trees, lovely beyond all poets' writing, with, beyond it, the jutting purple of the whale-backed Judean mountains. Susan and Miriam sat where they could watch, but the rest of the children settled down anyhow.

"Benny," said Miriam, "how big is our country?"

Benny was a cheerful liar of seven, with a vast imagination. He looked to the right where Hermon, far northward, lifted a little triangle of snow above the hills, looked left, where a glint of sullen acrid-blue alkali water far below, showed the Dead Sea, spat through a lost tooth and said, "Big as the world."

"Oh, no. How far can you walk?"

"I walked ten miles, once."

"We are six times that wide and twelve times that long. How many of us are there, Anna?"

EDNA E. POTTER

Anna was a tearful infant whose ancestors came back when Ezra rebuilt Jerusalem and brought the waters of Babylon with them.

"A million," she sniffled, embarrassed at the notice.

"When Pilate asked Annas, the priests counted the lambs at Passover. There were two hundred thousand lambs. How many ate a Passover lamb, Anna?"

"Fifteen."

"How many does that make, Susan?"

They worked it out with pebbles on the porch and found the answer. But Jonas Bar Jonas, the Rabbi's son, strolled up and reminded them that three people stayed home for every one who went to Passover. Jonas was twelve years old, almost grown, a Son of Precept—that is, already confirmed—and made of mingled fire and mud. Wherever Susan was, there Jonas soon happened. He added that it was not well for girls to play on market-places which, in a few minutes, would be crowded and suggested that the best place was Susan's flat housetop, leaning over the parapet.

"But why?" flashed Susan. "It is so hard for Miriam to get up there."

"Because Jesus Bar David passes, as you know. His forerunners are already in sight down the road. The crowd in front of Him will pack everything solid, even this porch. Don't you remember His two disciples who came through here a month ago? They said He would not stop."

"Of course. They cured Silly Thomas. If Miriam had not hidden they would have cured her too. Father says that if Jesus will stop He means to give Him supper. Perhaps He will cure Miriam."

"Jesus won't stop. He works on schedule, and this is too small a village. He won't cure Miriam because we can't get near Him for the crowd."

"He can cure Miriam. He shall stop. Is there a crowd?"

"Thousands. There they come."

"Jonas, He must cure Miriam. You must make Him."

"I? Make Him? How can I, Susan?"

"I don't know, stupid. Think. You think too, Miriam."

"But, Susan, I must go in. I am afraid." She trembled with the hope of being cured. It seemed impossible.

"Hush, Miriam, and pray. Benny, run get her mother. Hurry. Run! Anna, give me your hand."

There was good cause for hurry. Already the crowd was sweeping into the market-place from the road that rose along a shelf of the hills. So motley a multitude was rarely seen even in that packed land of suffocating myriads. There were Jews from Jerusalem, Arabs from the sandy desert, Galileans, Samaritans, Phœnicians from Tyre and a solid mass of Perean townsmen and farmers.

The head of the column spread out, making for the baker's shop and the few food-venders, so that the market-place was packed and all food bought out in five minutes. As the news spread, each three-foot side lane between the box-like adobe houses began to pour out local villagers. In a time shorter than it takes to write it the little square was a sea of heads, packed but good-natured.

A group of Arabs from Aretas' land behind the mountains, big men and brave men or they would not have come into an unfriendly country, invaded the porch and massed in front of the children, cutting off their view. Jonas protested, but they ignored him. Susan spoke fiercely to little Anna:

"Now cry. Cry loud, because you can not see. Scream, or I'll pinch you."

The long wail of a child will pierce where nothing else will. The Arabs looked around, smiled and made way for the children, the more readily as they could see over their heads. But the square, as they looked down from the porch, seemed impassable.

"You see," said Jonas.

"Think, Jonas. Oh, stupid Jonas, think."

"Make way, good people, make way for Jesus the Son of David. He has not planned to stop here, but at Aran, where He sleeps. Bring your sick to Aran, tomorrow, to be healed."

The voices, one golden and one brass, belonged to two Galileans, bearing staves, which they held crosswise as Roman soldiers

hold their spear-shafts, while they cleared a way across the market-place from one end to the other of the main road. Then another voice rang out:

"Ho, Peter, ho, John. The crowd closes in behind you. Turn and come back."

"Content, Zelotes."

As they turned, a little group, their long blue-gray Galilean mantles rolled blanket-wise and hung like yokes over their white garments, poured out of the road through the crowd in a wedge-formation. Behind them, in the space they cleared, walked a man alone. He was tall, strong, sinewy, with long brown hair falling to His shoulders and a full brown beard. He was dressed as a rabbi, in white to the knees over a longer dark cassock, and wore a rabbi's cloak rolled up like the others and hung, yoke-fashion, around His neck. He seemed weary, but there was a twinkle in His eye—and then you saw His face.

Your first impression was one of power, the second of understanding, the next of calm. Here was a man at perfect peace. Your last impression was of love. This man

not only understood these people, but loved them. Behind Him, after an interval but taking advantage of the space made clear for Him, came a group of men in the same costume talking together excitedly. By the little leather case strapped on the forehead, Susan knew them for rabbis from Jerusalem. A swift glance to one side showed Miriam's anxious-faced mother just coming out of an alleyway and trying to push toward the porch. Benny had gone for her and she had come.

Peter and John rejoined the little flying wedge of Galileans, then turned and led them. The road crossed the market-place diagonally. He was already as near the porch as He would come. There was too much noise in the crowd to be heard easily. Something must be done, and swiftly. Then Susan's sweet young voice rang out like a silver sword-blade:

"Jesus, thou Son of David, mercy!"

Everybody stopped. The Apostles stopped with annoyance, for they feared a miracle and delay. The rabbis stopped with anger, for it is one thing for followers to call a man

the rightful king, but quite another for children to hail Him by His name and titles in the public street. The Master stopped with amusement and with pity. He was the man who rediscovered children and reintroduced them to a stony-hearted world. Seeing the fresh young faces now He smiled and said:

"What is it, little maid?"

"A lameness, Sir. Miriam Bathsharan."

"Bring her to me."

The crowd parted, Jonas restored Miriam's crutch and came along, and the three children knelt at the Master's feet. Anxious, and taking advantage of the opening, Miriam's mother and Susan's father followed and stood behind them. The Master read the faces and their story and said again:

"What is it, children?"

"Miriam here. She can not walk to Aran. Her foot is withered."

The Master closed His eyes a moment and His lips moved; then He smiled at Miriam.

"Miriam Bathsharan, do you believe that I can cure you?"

"Of course, Lord."

"Give me your hand. Now rise and walk. As for you," and He turned to Susan: "Have you no word for yourself, little maid?"

"Only that you rest an hour with the Twelve at our house. Father is here to ask you. Mother made supper ready on the chance."

"So be it."

The Master called the Twelve around Him and followed Shaul the head man, who followed Susan. At the house door she stood aside and saw them pass. Then, in one laughing crying whirlwind of flying skirts, she was in Miriam's arms.

"Oh, Miriam, Miriam, Miriam, He did it, Miriam. We will hang your crutch in the Synagogue. Thank God, oh, thank God."

"You did it, Susan, darling. Without you He would not have stopped."

"Miriam, it is not fitting that the servant-girls should wait on the Master. You can walk now?"

"As well as you."

"Then come with me. We will send the girls away and wait on Him ourselves."

Bewildered by Babies

AFTER performing a miracle the Master retired to the village of Ephraim. He stayed there, without teaching or healing, for He was very tired. When it drew toward Passover He left Ephraim and went along the border between Samaria and Galilee until He met that Passover band from Capernaum made up of His mother and her friends. He led these down the eastern side of Jordan Valley toward Jerusalem. People going to Passover from Galilee gathered in great bands and traveled down that side of Jordan. Then they crossed the river at the stone bridge near Jericho and went up through the hills to Jerusalem. There were so many that a million and a half came up the Jericho road.

These traveling cities filled all the land at Passover. Most of them moved slowly and made a sort of picnic-holiday of the trip. Thus, the Master's path was full of crowds of well-to-do farmers. It was the ancient satisfaction of the eternal need for camping-out.

Naturally, when they heard that Jesus, the Great Physician, was at work again, these bands came to Him. Those before loitered, those behind hurried, and those following parallel roads slanted toward Him. Soon He was among many ten-thousands of people with their needs and illnesses. None dared delay. He was going up to Jerusalem, where a death-warrant waited for Him. All felt that in a few weeks he would be either triumphant or dead.

Among the women in His Passover band was His mother. She saw Him in His full power for the first time. He had gone over the land for years, healing and teaching, but she had not been with Him. He had journeyed with her at times, but then He neither taught nor cured. In Capernaum she had seen Him at work; but this was the

first time she had seen Him on the road, teaching and curing, surrounded by adoring multitudes and in the fulness of His power.

These Passover journeys were timed to come at the pleasantest part of the year. Many camped out in the open. Many slept in the bare sheds of the inns. The Master's Passover band, having women with it, must have made some arrangement to sleep in villages, for we find them one morning in one of the Perean towns just east of Jordan and gathered to set out on their day's journey.

The mother of our Lord was a kindly and efficient person, an able housewife and her son's good friend. She must have been, for once, when He came back from John Baptist's camp-meeting at Bethabara, He brought home without warning six young men as His guests, to stay a day or two. No young man would do that unless he were friends with his mother. She was also the rightful queen of Judea, and the villagers knew it. The women who traveled with her would take care of that. Such a woman, staying for the night at any household,

would make friends with the mistress of the house, hold a consultation over the ailments of the baby, hush it and care for it. There is no record, but, for convenience, let us call the woman of the house Balkis. The house itself was built out of mud and square, like a box. But, since mud costs nothing, it had several rooms and was large enough.

When Mary Mother came in Balkis curtsied, of course, and gave her the best seat on the clay divan that ran across one end of the room. She also gave her the best food she had, and served her standing. When they had spoken a little of many things, for that was politeness in the East, Balkis asked, at last:

"What is the matter with my little son? He is not well."

"Let me see the child," said Mary Mother, and took him in her arms.

The matter was probably the baby's eyes. Three children out of four in the East have something the matter with their eyes now, and, from what the rabbis say, it must have been almost as bad in our Lord's time. If not that, it may have been fever due to bad

food on which flies had lighted. That is the next most common illness in the East now. Whatever it was, it seemed serious to Mary.

"Slip into the next house and tell my Son that I would like to see Him," she said.

When Jesus came, stooping His tall head to enter the low doorway, Mary said:

"These people are kind. Cure their little boy for me."

He smiled wearily, because He knew it meant an hour's work, but of course He did it. With a sign to Mary Mother, Balkis thanked Him, then slipped out and told her friends, and everybody with a sick child came in and Jesus cured them all. The wise and kindly gentlewoman staying with Balkis was the most exalted in the land, queen-mother of the dethroned but rightful king, while Jesus was the rightful king and the Great Physician. Therefore the people were respectful, but, because they felt that they belonged to Him and He to them, they were insistent. They soon went home, for mothers with little babies can not keep them out late. But they went home to tell the mothers of well babies, and with the instinc-

tive purpose to be on hand to see the last of these great, simple and kindly way-farers in the morning.

Into the narrow streets, mere passages between the houses, the Master and His friends came out next morning and met in the market-place which was the heart of the crowded village. Villages always crowded and never straggled. Irrigated land was too precious to sprawl buildings over. It was very early, for the bulk of the day's journey had to be finished before the heat of noon. The red-rose heart of dawn was just unfolding into perfect day when they finished greeting one another and were ready to move.

More than half the population of the village was gathered to see them off. The man who was head of the House of David, the woman who was a housewife and a peasant and yet, by right, a queen, did not pass every day. Therefore many, especially the mothers with babies, stood and watched their preparations for departure.

Then the mother of one of the children whom the Master had cured was smitten

with a dreadful fear. In a few days the Master would be either dead or a king. In no case would He ever come that way again, a simple peasant like themselves. What should she do if her baby fell ill again? Best make sure of the utmost help while she could. His mother was there and would understand. A word or two and, taking courage from the presence of the Mother of our Lord, the peasant mother brought forward her child. Perhaps, if the Master blessed the baby, it would stay well longer. Best make sure of all she could while she could. Perhaps other benefits might come from that blessing.

A few words explained her reason and, incidentally, infected all the other mothers with her fears. The Master took the baby in His arms and blessed it. Then all the other mothers rushed upon Him with their babies. Early as was the hour, practically all of them were there. Everybody went to bed soon after dusk in those days and rose at dawn because lamps were very expensive.

Child by child, the Master took the babies in His arms and blessed them. The scene

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was beautiful, symbolic, touching, and to the Twelve, it seemed interminable. The Master, they felt, was really too good-natured. What good did it do to babies to lay hands on them and say a few words of blessing over each?

"The crowd is imposing on Him," declared Peter.

"Dawn deepens into day," said John. "The precious morning moments of cool travel are speeding, one by one. Dozens of men and women must toil through the noon heat to-day to make up this lost time. And still the Master blesses interminable multitudes of babies."

Unwalled Perean villages often had five hundred households or more, and nearly every household had a baby. To take a baby in one's arms and bless it may take less than a minute; but three hundred minutes are five hours, and that is half a day. The Twelve consulted together, became more and more impatient, and, at last, grew desperate. They scattered through the crowd and began to talk:

"You delay your King," said one.

"You impose upon Him," said another.

"We forbid you mothers to bring forward any more babies," said all of them.

When the Master heard it His eyes blazed. He was angry, and He rebuked them. Yet He forgave them, too, because their mistake was well-meant and sprang from faithfulness. He issued a general order in the hearing of the Disciples, of the crowd and of the Angels. He said:

"Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven."

That general order still stands.

The Fig Tree

ONCE upon a time there was a barren fig tree. It was not wicked. Trees can't be. It was ill. But it was a very good symbol of wickedness, because it was ill in a special way. At its death it grew to be the most famous fig tree in the world, because Jesus withered it.

A fig tree was the national emblem of Judea, just as a thistle is the emblem of Scotland or a lily of France. A fig tree in an irrigated vineyard meant Judea, and was stamped on all the coins of the country. Judea was a theocracy—that is, the country was governed by priests. So a fig tree full of ripe figs meant that Judea was really re-

ligious; and a fig tree without any figs, but full of leaves, meant that Judea pretended to be very religious but was not so at all.

Our Lord had said that very thing—that Judea looked very religious but was not really so—and the crowd in the Temple had asked Him what would happen to any country which was that way. He told them that the Lord would destroy it, and they answered: "God forbid!" He kept the question in His mind and waited for some way to make sure that the Apostles would understand and not forget His answer.

When our Lord was at Jerusalem He did not stay in the city. He does not seem to have liked the crowded houses. He stayed in Bethany, a pleasant little village about two miles east, and walked in and out every day. The road led around the shoulder of the Mount of Olives and through Bethpage, a tinier little village even than Bethany. It must have been on the outskirts of Bethpage that He saw the fig tree, in an old vacant lot with the wall down and open to the road. He would not have trespassed on anybody's garden unless it had been abandoned. And

an old fig tree in what had once been an old vineyard but was now open to passers-by, could only be on the edge of some little village.

Most fig trees were bare of leaves at Passover and bore no fruit. But a few, especially those that leafed out early, had under the new leaves a few dwarf figs that had ripened after the crop was gathered the year before and then dried on the tree. Our Lord had fasted and prayed most of that night, and so had eaten no supper and no breakfast. He walked over to the thick-leaved flourishing-looking tree and examined the branches for fruit. The left-over little withered figs on such trees are often very sugary and sweet. However, this tree had none. It had all the signs of vigorous fruit-bearing and no fruit. It was just like Judea, which had all the signs of being very religious and no real religion.

Then our Lord saw how He could give so sharp a lesson to the Twelve and, through them, to all the world, of what happens—of what must happen—to that kind of a nation that the whole world would never forget it.

In such a case it is the nation's fault. It was not the fig tree's fault, because fig trees are not responsible and nations are. But then, fig trees have no feelings and can not be hurt and nations can. So it was no injustice to the fig tree either. And by making it a tremendous object-lesson for all ages He could so use it as to save thousands of people. He said to it: "Bear no more figs forever."

The Apostles understood, and waited to see something happen, but nothing happened at all. Jesus went on into the city, and they followed Him.

That night they were thinking about other things and did not notice the fig tree. Next morning, when they passed by again on the way into the city, they went to look at it. The fig tree was withered away. They then understood what happens to nations which pretend to be religious and are not. The Word of the Lord touches them and they wither away. Then the Apostles were very much afraid, and so were the other people they told about it.

Now there were three million people in and around Jerusalem at Passover and all

but a few of them camped out and slept out-of-doors. Three million is an enormous number. They filled every room in every house, and every barn and toolshed and field and open space and vacant lot for miles around, and slept under every hedge and little bridge and clump of bushes and under every leafy tree. Therefore somebody had been sleeping under this tree every night, for it was in a vacant lot and was covered with thick leaves that kept the dew off.

In such an enormous multitude there are always little motherless boys who have just lost their fathers; and a leafy tree on a vacant lot is just the place a frightened little boy would hide and sleep under. This little boy's name was Daniel Bar Kalphar. His father had been killed earlier in the week, when Barabbas made an insurrection in the city. Daniel did not know it for certain. All he knew was that his father was gone when he came back from an errand, and he had been hunting for him all day ever since. He lived on scraps of bread he begged from strangers and trudged out from the crowded city to sleep under this fig tree at night.

It was John who found out about him. John was the youngest of the Disciples, not very much more than a boy himself. John saw him dodge into the bushes. After the others had stopped exclaiming at the power that could kill a tree with a word and had gone away, it was John who stayed behind and caught him. When John had learned his story and his name and had given Daniel a cake of bread with butter on it—you should have seen him wolf it down—he sat down cross-legged under the withered tree, with his chin on his hands, and thought. For something had to be done about the boy. John was in no hurry. Jesus had nodded when he saw John stay behind.

At last John put the matter from him, as impossible to settle yet. Small Daniel was still hungry, so John took him into the city and made him promise to be under the fig tree again at least an hour before sunset and wait. "It may be dark before we pass," said John: "I do not know when Jesus will come back to Bethany. Wait for me, though, however late it is, for I will surely come."

Then he took Daniel into an eating-place

and filled him up: filled him up carefully with bread and broth and dried figs and roasted mutton. Poor hungry little Daniel had not had such a feast for ages. It made him sleepy. So, when John left him, he hunted for his father for an hour or two, but could not keep awake. By mid-afternoon, he trudged back to the fig tree and went to sleep there in the dry hot sunlight.

Now, remember that Jerusalem at Passover was crowded with millions of people, and even among only one million people everything is happening all the time. Some one is being born and some one else is dying. Some one is getting married, some one is coming home and some one is starting on a journey. Some one is getting rich and some one is growing poor and so on. Anything and everything that can happen is happening to somebody in so large a crowd as that, every day.

In the Woman's Court of the Temple was a poor widow who had lost her only son and had come up to Passover and to the Woman's Court to kneel before God and mourn and pray. She was very sad; and she

was not so wise as she grew to be later. It was in love and peace and joy and happiness she was poor; not in money. She had enough money to be rich. She was very lonely and bereaved and unhappy and religious and pious and tearful and muddle-hearted—which is worse than being just muddle-headed, by a very great deal—and she tried to talk to Jesus.

The Lord was busy with the Pharisees, so He could not talk with her. But He smiled, and signed to John to speak to her instead. As John let her talk, there grew up in his mind the words, "Fig tree, fig tree." For she was like a barren fig tree full of leaves and without any fruit. But as she was a person, and not a tree, she had to be tended and saved, which a tree does not.

Then, as John listened and wondered what to say to her he remembered that, before the fig tree was withered as an object-lesson to men little Daniel had slept comfortably under its shelter, even if it was barren. Then, as he looked at Jesus, a bright idea came to him. He cleared his throat, and Jesus looked around and caught his eye and

understood and nodded; for Jesus could read thoughts. So, when the barren fig tree —I mean the heart-broken, childless, rich woman—let him talk at last, he told her where to find the withered fig tree at Bethpage.

"Go," he said, "and wait under it. It may be dark before we pass, but wait; for I will surely come."

She went out across the great court and through the outer gate of the Temple. There two servants met her with a brown mule. She got upon the mule's back and rode out to Bethpage. There she left the two servants and the mule just outside the ruined wall of the deserted garden and went in and sat down under the withered fig tree.

There little Daniel lay asleep. He was just the age her own boy would have been, and he looked very like her own boy, for one little Jewish boy usually looks like another. She bent over him and watched. She noticed tear-marks on his face, for he had been crying for his father a little before he went to sleep. Then her own tears rained down.

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I think you can tell the rest of this story yourself. What would you do if you were frightened and weary and had lost your father and mother and did not know where to go or what to do, and you woke up because a pretty lady kissed you and her tears fell on your face? What little Daniel did was to put his arms around her neck before he was half awake and say: "Mother, oh, mother!" Then, dirty as he was and beautifully as she was dressed, she forgot dress and dirt and took him in her arms.

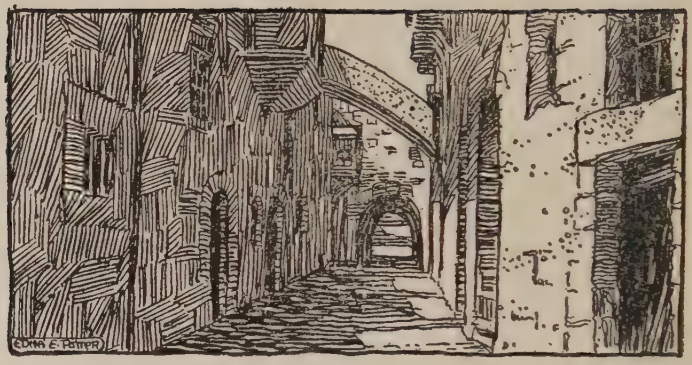
They had both promised to wait there for John, so they waited. John was a very long time coming, for Jesus made a great speech that day and talked long with the Pharisees. It was sunset when He passed by. There was a brown mule lying down on the grass inside the ruined wall of the old garden, with two servants asleep beside him. The rest went on, but John stopped and waked those servants and went with them to look under the fig tree. They found a very grand, great lady sitting against it, fast asleep, with a very dirty little boy asleep in her arms.

John woke them and talked with them and you can guess what he said. Then Daniel talked, and you can guess what he said, also. Then the woman said:

"Little Daniel will stay with me and be my little boy, always, and we will hunt for his father."

John saw them off together, with the two servants leading the brown mule and little footsore Daniel riding in the lady's arms. Then he went back to Jesus and reported; though it was such a queer report that only Jesus understood it. The other Apostles could not make it out at all, though maybe you can. What John said was:

"The other barren fig tree beareth fruit."



The Carpenter

How would you like to have been a tourist in Palestine with education enough to understand things and money enough to live on, an intelligent and congenial companion, and leisure to ask questions, at a time when most of the men and women who knew Jesus of Nazareth were still alive?

There was such a tourist, a keen young doctor named Luke. His companion was Paul, who had been Saul of Tarsus. They wrote a small book about what they heard, or rather they merely rewrote another man's book from a new point of view, inserting, here and there, essential details.

Of course they learned a great many de-

tails not inserted in the book and interviewed many people whose story contained no new essentials. I have always fancied that among these people was that carpenter who made the cross. They would find him, of course, by asking questions of the Christians at Jerusalem. They would prove themselves Men of the Way or followers of Christ by drawing a fish on the pavement and by other signs and passwords. When this was done the carpenter would speak freely.

"Yes, sirs, these two hands made the cross. Would they had been cut off first, except that it was done unknowing. I meant it for Barabbas. Barabbas made sedition in the city. He killed my son James outside my carpenter shop. I was away. My little daughter Miriam saw from an upper window and sickened with the horror, so, when they took Barabbas and his leaders, I went to the Romans and gave them wine for the right to furnish crosses. Who would have dreamed Barabbas would go free and Jesus die on one? Barabbas' cross was larger than the rest. I meant it should be heavy

and it was; but, ah, he did not bear it nor it him.

"I did not know Jesus then; but when Peter cured the thousands in the Temple after Pentecost we took my little daughter Miriam there. He lifted up the horror from her heart. Through Peter we came to know and love Jesus. Would God I might have borne his cross instead of making it.

"I used the best fir-wood and brought it to the Prætorium as ordered. There they kept me and forced me to change the titilum—the sign-board that told the crime—paint out the accusation of Barabbas and paint in the word that Jesus Christ was king. The soldiers saw my hatred and made me stay and do it for a cruel jest, or I would have found and slain Barabbas, not knowing then that we must forgive.

"They said Barabbas was some great one with a false name. False he was, but great he was not, else he would have made some move to rescue or at least to give a merciful quick death to the man who died for him. Barabbas had men at command. And even the Romans couldn't have stopped him.

No, Barabbas was no great one, but small of soul and cowardly.

"They led our Lord away and released me. There were three million Passover pilgrims in the town. In that great crowd Barabbas vanished like one black raindrop in the sea. I could not find him, so I went up to the Temple to pray the God of Israel for vengeance. I did not follow Jesus because I had no wish to see a good man murdered.

"The Temple was packed solid, outer court and inner. Two hundred thousand men were there, and the great male choir of ten thousand voices was just enough to lead them. It stirs the blood to hear two hundred thousand men sing the greatest music in the world. There is no dignity, no grandeur, no wonder of vast music, no solemn ceremony in all the world to be compared with our great choral worship of the One True God in our vast Passover.

"I sent word to a friend, a priest, who after hours of delay found room for me and before the time of the evening sacrifice brought me through a cloister into the inner

court. It had been darkening since noonday, but the service went on. And at the same hour when we worshiped God in the Temple with ceremony and sacrifice and mighty music that might melt the skies we crucified Him on Calvary.

"I was in the Temple when He died. The day turned dark and darker till black night was on us at three in the afternoon. They brought the Lamb of Sacrifice before us, held by armed men as the law requires. The armed men, by the light of torches, dragged it to the north side of the altar. The crowd shivered at the great darkness, but the ritual went on. The priests slew the lamb and caught its blood in a golden bowl praying, as the law requires, that God accept its innocent life in place of our guilty lives forfeited by sin. Then, with a torch on either side, the High Priest's deputy—Caiaphas was at the cross holding the people quiet—went up the sanctuary steps to pour the blood before the Lord.

"Then far below the Temple the great earth itself groaned and upheaved. The Temple doors flew open. Before us all, the

priest standing in the light of the seven-branched candlestick in the Holy Place, staggered and dropped the bowl and the blood spattered the veil. Then the veil of the Temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom and the Ark of the Covenant bearing the Mercy-Seat was open to the eyes of all men. A second shock smote all two hundred thousand of us to our knees, a third to our faces. The seven-branched candlestick was overturned. The men who held the torches dropped them. The altar-fire was shaken through its grating and went out and perfect darkness absolutely blotted out the scene. At the same hour Jesus of Nazareth, on the cross I made, died upon Calvary."

When It Was Dark

THE event which became the turning-point of the world's history happened some time on Easter in the year twenty-nine A.D. just outside the city of Jerusalem in Joseph of Arimathæa's garden.

Joseph of Arimathæa and Nicodemus were rich. Both were members of the Sanhedrin and men of power—quite as important as the vice-president and leading senator in Washington now. By begging the body of Jesus from Pilate and burying it they defied Caiaphas the high priest. Annas, the power behind Caiaphas, had also been defied and he probably sent men to see them. Their own political followers and

their business agents were uncertain what policy to follow now that Nicodemus and Joseph had defied the power of the state. But they had no advice to give yet.

They knew that Jesus had predicted His own death and announced that He would rise again the third day, for everybody knew that. They did not believe it. Nobody believed it. But Jesus often spoke in parables and certainly meant something, though perhaps not what he said. And any sane man would wait till the third day before deciding on any settled policy.

Therefore they did as men in such circumstances might do to-day. They went away saying they would return in three days' time, and leaving no address.

Where they went is obvious enough. Before deciding on a policy they had to know if anything connected with Jesus happened on the third day. It was of immense importance that they get the very first possible news of it without error. It must be absolutely correct. Joseph of Arimathæa owned a pleasure-house outside the city, in which he did not usually stay. The body

of Jesus of Nazareth was buried on the grounds of that pleasure-house in a tomb in the garden. Some gardens did not have houses in them, but most did. The main reason for such gardens was privacy, and from a point where the public road went over a hill you could look over the wall and see into Joseph's garden.

In this house Joseph of Arimathæa and Nicodemus stayed Saturday and Saturday night, talking over the best ways to protect their great fortunes and perhaps their lives from the attacks of Annas. There was a Roman centurion and a guard of soldiers posted over the tomb. But beyond building a fire on the walk and trampling on the flower-beds they would do little harm. They would not trouble the house because they knew that Joseph of Arimathæa was a friend of Pilate.

There was thus a low fire on a broad walk in the garden—the loveliest garden of lilies and roses around Jerusalem, for Joseph took pride in his garden, irrigated it, spent money on it and loved it so much he wished to be buried in it. The lily-of-the-

valley and the rose-of-Sharon were special flowers of the city. He had them, great beds of them, and Jesus must have walked there at least once with him, when living. The full moon, very low in the west, made the world all silver and ebony. Around the fire, on the trampled flower-beds, were soldiers wrapped in cloaks, asleep.

At the back of the garden, against a low cliff, was a circular stone like a big millstone, held in place by a slanting stone slab. Where the two stones met and sealed to both was a white strip of papyrus. In front of these stones paced a sentry, armed. Caius Carena, centurion in command, woke, sat up near the fire and yawned, then rose, walked up to the sentry and asked if anything had happened. The sentry saluted and pointed out two men visible over the low parapet on the roof of the little flat-topped villa, saying that they had just come out. Carena strolled over to the house and spoke softly, so as not to wake the soldiers.

"Who are you?"

"Nicodemus, Teacher of Israel, and Joseph of Arimathæa. Hail, Caius Carena."

"Your pardon, Princes. I would not have challenged had I known you. Why are you awake here in the last watch of the night?"

The two came down the outside stairway from roof to garden before they answered. Then Nicodemus said:

"I woke and could not sleep again, Carena, for weariness of heart, so I waked Joseph. This is the last hour of the last night. Has anything happened?"

"What could happen? I thought that you went home after you sent us all out that supper, for which I thank you."

"We slept here in my villa because, from our town houses, we might be called to a meeting of the Sanhedrin. Was Jesus good, Carena?"

"Pilate adjudged him innocent. Petronius, in command at the Crucifixion, said he was Son of God. Yes, He was good. So say no more of His death, lest you insult Cæsar."

"Peace, peace. I would insult no one; not man, nor God, in whom I trusted till Jesus died forsaken; not earth, which

spawns evil; nor heaven, which betrays faith and leaves a good man's prayers unanswered; nor hell, which triumphs over all things. He died in vain. This is the last watch of the last night and nothing happens. He was so sure of God, and God forsook Him. How long shall you keep guard, Centurion?"

"Till sunrise, Prince. It begins to dawn already toward the third day. Our watch will soon be over."

"Look up, Centurion."

They all obeyed the sentry and looked up. The faint brightness which Carena had mistaken for dawn swiftly increased. It came from an armed man descending through the sky whose face, flesh, robes and armor were of light. Romans are not religious, and neither were Joseph and Nicodemus. None of them yet believed what they saw, but there was no doubt they saw it. Awakened by their exclamations the sleeping soldiers threw away their cloaks and sprang to their feet. The sentry reeled to one side.

The armed man came to earth. He

touched the tombstone with his sword. The propping slab fell down, the round stone rolled to one side and fell down also, and the earth reeled and shook. The armed man, like one whose work was done, sat upon the fallen stone, his sword between his knees. Then there burst forth from the tomb an effulgent brightness so dazzling, so blinding, so unbearable that every man in the garden shut his eyes, then, finding that not enough, fell on his face on the earth and shut out the intolerable light with arms and hands.

After a time it darkened. The centurion raised his head and found that he could see. The last level rays of the setting moon came through the trees, and the garden was ebony and silver, almost as before. Not quite, for dawn was rose-gray in the east, the tomb was open, and the round tombstone lay among the flowers on its side.

Obeying swiftly-issued orders from Carena, the soldiers lighted torches at the fire and searched the tomb, Joseph and Nicodemus following behind. The outer chamber was empty; the inner chamber where He

had lain held grave clothes, not unrolled but lying folded together and the napkin that had been about his head lying folded together by itself to one side. It was as if the body had melted out of them. No one could have taken them off and folded them together again that way, even if there had been time. Except for them the chamber was empty. The body of Jesus of Nazareth was gone.

The Testing of Thomas

In the upper chamber of John Mark's house in Jerusalem, the Eleven waited for guidance. John Mark's mother Maria and Rhoda the house-girl served their meals there. They had gone out for walks and for talks with the Disciples and the Seventy, and to pray in the Temple. But nearly always one or more of them had been on the flat housetop, praying.

Probably the time did not seem long. They needed it to realize that Christ was risen. This, though it is a very joyful process, takes time. When Columbus discovered America it needed half a generation for the peasants of Europe to realize that there

was another world. When an unbeliever discovers God it takes at least seven days to do the same.

One man's ideas however, would not readjust themselves. When Jesus first appeared to them Thomas was absent from the gathering of the brethren. He stayed away from Church that Sunday night. Probably his reasons were good, for the Lord was very patient with him. But, good or bad, they had deprived him of a great religious experience and left him unbelieving. On the eighth evening after the Resurrection the Hundred and Twenty were gathered in the upper chamber of John Mark's house, and Thomas was with them. They had a supper, for Maria, John Mark's mother, would not have permitted them to meet without. It was informal, for though the twenty or so women served it and so did not count, the hundred men were too many for the elaborate service of a formal banquet. James, the son of Alphæus, was toastmaster, for we find him presiding later at the councils of the Apostles. The speaking did not wait for the end, but went on during the supper

itself, because they had so much to say: for Jesus had told them to go to Galilee, and yet they were hardly free to start while one of the Eleven doubted. At last Thomas himself spoke:

"Brothers, you have all been gentle with a friend. I do not believe, not because I will not but because I can not. I would give life itself to believe. I really would, for if Jesus has come back alive then He has conquered death, opened the gates of Paradise and won for all His servants Life Eternal. What difference would our little earthly death make then? It would not matter. Also, if Jesus has come back alive there is a World of spirits, a greater World by far than this of flesh, and He is king in it and we, His servants, are kings and princes. The thing implies too much. It is too great to take in. I know that you are sure. I know you think you saw Him. I know that you must have seen something—but Jesus, in the flesh, alive, a great wound through His heart—it means too much!"

There was a pause, then James nodded to Mary Magdalene, who answered:

"I saw Him twice. I was in the tomb weeping. I saw a man in the doorway against the daylight in the garden. I thought it was the gardener. He spoke, I knew Him. I clung to His feet. He sent me away to tell the Brethren to meet Him in Galilee. The other women also saw Him twice."

One by one James called on each of them, and one by one they spoke. Mary of Bethany was especially emphatic of how they had all touched and clung to Him. James even called upon the Mother of our Lord to speak. She said, "He lives." Then Cleopas of Emmaus and John Mark told how He had met them on the road and walked and talked with them and taught them from the prophets about Himself, how He must die and rise again. Everybody had heard all the stories every day for a week, yet nobody was weary of them, partly for love and partly because now and then one of the tellers would remember and relate some trivial but new and vivid detail. Peter told how when he was grieving in the garden Jesus had come to him.

But Thomas was unpersuaded. Something inside himself believed, of course, for at this story something inside every man believes; but his brain held back; at last, in answer to a suggestion that Jesus had not come the week before until the ten believed, so that it might be Thomas's unbelief that now held him aloof from them, Thomas burst out:

"But think, James, think. If He is dead, then in the long run, evil triumphs and righteousness is useless, and God forsakes the good, and life were better ended, that we might die and be done. But if He lives, then He is God. We have walked and talked with God. We have eaten and drunk with God. We have put a hand upon God's shoulder and advised Him. We have wept over the crucifixion—the crucifixion, James—of God. I have sought carefully with prayers for a full week. There is no middle course. Either He is not risen or He is God."

Then Philip said: "Who was it said, 'Have I been so long with you and thou hast not known me, Philip?' I know Him now."

Then John said: "At least you love Him and you would obey Him. Do you remember how, on the night on which He was betrayed, at the end of the supper, He took bread and broke it and gave it to us saying, 'This is my body which is broken for you'? Then He took wine and blessed it and gave the cup to be shared among us saying, 'This is my blood of the New Testament which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this as often as you shall drink it in remembrance of me.' It is the end of this supper and we have not done this yet. Before you, Thomas, is bread and wine."

Then Thomas, stirred beyond himself, took up the bread and wine saying, "This, truly, I can do because He said so. But to be quite sure it is not some one who impersonates Jesus I must put my finger in the very prints of the nails and put my hand in the wound in His side."

There was a moment's pause. Then Thomas set down the bread and wine and his face changed; and his heart also changed within him, for Jesus, risen, stood in their

midst. They looked at one another for a long moment. Then Jesus said:

"Reach hither thy finger, Thomas, and see my hands; and reach hither thy hand and put it into my side; and be not faithless, but believing."

But Thomas did none of these things. He fell at Jesus' feet and answered, "My Lord and my God!"

A Mountain in Galilee

Our risen Lord made appointment to meet His disciples in Galilee. The exact time and place are not recorded, but a word to Peter in that long interview when they walked off together after the miraculous draft of fishes, would have been enough. The Horns of Hattin, where he preached the Sermon on the Mount, was probably the place.

Blind Bartimæus, Timson, blind Timson of Jericho, would be there of course, and the women and the Seventy and the Twelve, and that admirable and energetic blind man who went to the Pool of Siloam and washed and came back, seeing, to out-

face the Sanhedrin for Jesus. Zacchæus, who climbed the tree, would be there, because Timson would tell him; and the little maid of Capernaum would persuade her father to bring her. As for the four hundred or so others, they were friends of these or their friends' friends, come most from love and some from wonder and a few from sheer stark hopeful incredulity. Let us, in imagination, join Bartholomew and go out with him from Bethsaida.

All roads converged on the pass up into the hills.

"Why, Timson, blind Timson of Jericho, how come you here plying a sturdy staff in Galilee?"

"The word went out, the word went out, Bartholomew, that He will meet the brethren. I am not of the Twelve or of the Seventy; yet I am His follower, and so, a brother."

"That's true, though we of the Twelve and Seventy sometimes forget it in the mad joy of these stupendous days. Where's the other blind man?"

"Simon Bar Jonas, to whom Christ gave

sight with me, was held by a hurt foot and could not come."

"Why not heal Simon?"

"Who? I?"

"Yes, you. We have found that all who bear the Name can heal in some degree. Let both confess sins, both fast, both pray. Then let the well lay hands upon the sick and they recover. Try it."

They walked along together, each man silently praying; Bartholomew that God would give the power of healing to Timson, and Timson that it might be granted that he see Jesus. It is quite a long road up the little pass between the hills, and then over the hills themselves; and there were many on it. They overtook Joses, the brother of James and Jude and Simon, and he joined them, saying that Mary Mother followed, with Maria the widow of Cleopas and the Brethren, and that James and John Zebedee were gone on ahead to hold the people. Just as he finished speaking, the psalm, "The Lord is my Shepherd," sung softly by three or four hundred voices, was heard over the crest of the hill. The three went forward,

singing, and joined the singers on the plain. Between the Horns of Hattin, on the rock from which the Lord once delivered the Sermon on the Mount, James and John Zebedee stood. After the singing there came a pause. At last some one called out:

"Where is he, James?"

"Who called? Ah, yes, I see. The widow's son of Nain. Don't be impatient, brother. All are not here yet. In His own good time He will come!"

"But, James, are you sure?"

"Who is it—ah, the first leper cleansed. Yes, it is so. We saw and touched him."

"But, James, it is too wonderful. It might have been a vision."

"Who's that? The man with the withered hand? Has a vision a firm handclasp? He supped with us, ate bread and fish. He was no vision."

"But, James."

"Nay, friends, in His own good time He comes. His Mother Mary and the other women come now, with Peter and the brethren. Make way."

The crowd made way, and greeted the

newcomers. Many sat down and every one fell into conversation with his neighbors. There was some impatience, some doubt, but mostly a calm clear certainty spreading from those who had seen Him in the upper chamber at Jerusalem and from the little maid of Capernaum. At last the other James, the son of Alphæus, the presiding officer of the Apostles, went up the hill, sat down upon the stone where Christ had sat when he preached the Sermon on the Mount, and spoke.

"Brethren, He is risen. He is alive. I think He must be here now, though invisible, for He promised that where any were gathered together in His name He would be with them. Many of us have seen Him, some singly, some together, but all as it were unprepared and suddenly. But this meeting was in His mind from His first rising. This is not night nor twilight nor dawning but a bright breezy forenoon, not a room nor a tomb but open pasture land, not a chance gathering but summoned by appointment after days, not a little group but more than five hundred brethren at

once. Hail, Peter. Greeting, Thomas. Welcome, dear Mother of our Lord. Hail, Bar——"

"Have you no word for me, James?"

James turned and knelt, and with him the whole company dropped to their knees for on the rock stood Jesus. He descended from it and went and stood among them. Those nearest laid timid hands upon the hem of His garment. He noted and welcomed the touch. He was substantial and no vision. He walked among them and greeted many by name. At last when their first amazement was past He went a little way up the hill and sat down and said:

"Go into all the world and preach the good news to every human creature. He that believes and is baptized shall be saved, and he that disbelieves shall be condemned. And these signs shall follow those that believe. In my name they shall cast out devils. They shall speak with new tongues. They shall take up serpents unharmed and if they drink of any deadly thing it shall in no way hurt them. And they shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover."

He said more, much more, for He taught them about the Kingdom of God. By this time those close to Him were convinced; but in a crowd of more than five hundred all can not get close to one at the same time; and there were some on the outskirts of the crowd, more timid and less eager about pushing to the center, who doubted. The Lord noted these, understood, went down on to the plain and came to them. He gave them the opportunity to look closely at Him, and, if they would, to touch Him. Then he spoke saying:

"All power has been given to me in earth and heaven. Go you therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost; and lo, I am with you always unto the ends of the world."

When He was gone, Timson, who was no longer blind nor a beggar, going home that evening, said thoughtfully to Bartholomew:

"I shall await the signal at Jerusalem and then go out, working my way among the

farms, and tell of Him until He calls me home. But first—I shall go back to Jericho and heal Simon Bar Jonas."

Ascension

CENTURIONS were commissioned officers, but Roman armies had not the same distinctions we have, and the average centurion, grown gray in service, was not so much like a young shave-tail lieutenant as he was like one of our wise old grizzled top-sergeants. The centurions' lounging-room in Jerusalem was on the second floor of the great tower of Antonia. There one morning, about forty days after Passover in the year twenty-nine A.D., came Caius Curio, centurion in command at Capernaum in Galilee.

Curio was an unusual man. Years before, when first sent to Palestine, he had learned the native language, which most

Romans never took the trouble to do. Loaned by the Imperial Government to Herod's army, he rose to be practically Tribune. He had grown wealthy and popular—had even used some of Herod's gifts to build a synagogue for the people of Capernaum—and was now in nominal command of the native troops in that city and actually the most powerful officer in Galilee. He was met on the stairs and recognized by Valerius Gaius, centurion of the permanent Roman guard of Antonia.

"Hail, Curio."

"Hail, Gaius. Well met. Help me to an interview with Pilate. I rode to Cæsarea, learned he was here because Caiaphas feared rioting, and hastened after him. The world is crazy. Herod is on one of his long drinking bouts. So far as military matters go I control Galilee, since I hold Capernaum. I must know Pilate's plans."

"'Must' is a strong word, Curio, when used by a centurion about a procurator. Pilate is in consultation with Annas. No one can see him now."

"He is not *my* commander. I have more

men under me than he has, and as large a territory. I must take measures swiftly; must therefore know what measures Pilate takes, lest I hinder them."

"True. True enough. Yet none can see Pilate now. Come therefore to the centurions' room and wait. The time will not be wasted. It is as plain as pikestaves your Galileans were uneasy because of this King Jesus of Nazareth Petronius crucified the other day; the man who rose again. He will no longer trouble you."

"If that be sure I have no need to see Pilate!"

They turned into a vaulted stone room and the three or four centurions there hailed them roundly. When greetings were over and the steward ordered to bring wine they all sat down and explained their presence; for Petronius, Caius Carena and some others would normally have been at Cæsarea, but had come up with Pilate, and Curio was supposed to be in Galilee. The others were bluff hearty men. But Curio, through training at Herod's court, had developed the courtesy of a senator, and Petronius was at

least his equal. At last Valerius Gaius said to him:

"Petronius, tell Curio about the king you crucified on the day of the first earthquake. Jesus, I mean, of Nazareth."

"Speak softly then. The man was Son of God."

Petronius might have said more, but Curio took a long draught of wine and spoke instead:

"My Galilee is full of all unrest, ripe for revolt and buzzing like a beehive with stories that He has risen and been seen there since He died. I heard, saw spies, examined witnesses. I liked the Rabbi because He was a reasonable man, more like a Roman than one of these flighty Orientals. My spies reported that He had made appointment to meet Disciples on a certain day at the Horns of Hattin. 'Tis barely ten miles from Capernaum. I took horse and rode. Man, He was there."

"Who personated Him?"

"No one, my Gaius. He knew me and spoke to me. He had a great spear wound through his heart—a Roman spear. No man

could live ten heart-beats with that wound —and yet He lived. Galilee may explode any minute. I made things as safe as I could there and rode here to tell and hear from Pilate."

"I ordered that spear put through His heart," spoke up Carena, "and saw it done, my Curio. You're right. It was mortal. And yet He is alive. Nevertheless your district will not revolt. The man returned to Jerusalem. And this morning, just before you came he left Palestine."

"Where has He gone?"

"To Heaven."

Among any other group of Roman centurions—or Roman civilians, for that matter—the statement would have been received as humor and with a shout of laughter. If repeated seriously men would have questioned the sanity of the speaker. But these men knew the facts. Petronius had watched by the cross, Curio had been on the mountain on Galilee, Gaius had stood guard at the tomb, and Dolabella, newly promoted, had been officer at the Bethany gate

that morning. Now Carena had seen something. He went on:

"Pilate sent for me this morning. In John Mark's house in the upper city the Man, Jesus of Nazareth, had appeared. John had time to send out messengers and summon the brethren. Other appearances have been as it were in private—even the one you saw in Galilee, my Curio.

"This was public. He walked quietly through the residence-streets into the swarming lower town where seven-story tenements crowd upon one another. His Disciples were around Him, but thousands watched Him from alleys, door-steps, from house-tops and from windows. Any one was free to follow Him, and thousands did. He recognized friends and spoke to them. He passed through the crowded district of the shops and went out through the Bethany gate.

"Pilate ordered me to take a clump of spears, follow and bring him back. I spurred across the Valley of the Shadow and up the slopes of Olivet. At the top of the mountain, looking down on Bethany, a mul-

titude were gathered. You asked who personated Him in Galilee, my Gaius, and learned it did not matter, because He had a spear wound through His heart. Spare now your question of who personated Him here. It does not matter, because He rose into the air. Spreading out His hands in blessing, He rose into the air up, up and up, until a bright cloud received Him out of our sight."

"There is no doubt about the man," said Dolabella. "I saw Him at the gate. I knew Him from the trial and the scourging. The scars were on His neck and His hands."

The little group of centurions sat quiet. In the long last the safety of Palestine was in their hands, rather than those of Pilate. For what you do to quiet any crowd is never so important as how you do it. Each man, therefore, discussed possibilities and debated measures. At last they turned to Dolabella as the youngest among them.

"There must be a Heaven," he said. "This King has gone there. He is the Son of God. There will be no revolt till He returns. He will return when, without

bloodshed, all men everywhere are of one mind to make Him king. His followers will take the world over, city by city, with that intent, yet not to govern it but to establish peace. Meanwhile, Rome rules."

The group nodded, rose and resumed, with jingle and clank of military circumstance such equipment as they had laid aside.

But Carena repeated musingly, "There is, there must be, life after death, and a Heaven. How shall we get there?"

"By serving Jesus Christ," said Caius Curio.

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In the hills of Galilee

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